

Partnership or Perish? A Study of Artistic Collaborations

by

**Margaret Baguley *Grad.Dip.Teach(Sec.),
Grad.Dip.Arts, BAVA, MA***

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Tasmania
August, 2007

Volume 1/3

Declaration of Originality

This thesis contains no material that has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information and duly acknowledged in the thesis, and to the best of my knowledge and belief no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgment is made in the text of the thesis.

Signed:

Date:

Permission to Copy

This thesis may be available for loan and limited copying in accordance with the Copyright Act 1968.

Signed:

Date:

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the support and kind assistance of my supervisory team:

Professor Vincent McGrath, Head of School of Visual & Performing Arts, University of Tasmania for his perceptive insights into issues concerning the ego and the art world;

Dr Deborah Malor, Theory Program/Honours & Postgraduate Coordinator, School of Visual and Performing Arts, University of Tasmania for her theoretical knowledge and structural expertise;

Mr Malcom Bywaters, Academy Gallery Director, School of Visual & Performing Arts, University of Tasmania for his unfailing guidance and support during the creation of the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition;

Mr Martin Kelly, Retired Lecturer in Ceramics & Asian Art History, Queensland University of Technology, who has been a wonderful mentor from the very beginning.

I would also like to thank:

Professor Kay Lawrence, University of South Australia and the State and Territory Embroidery Guilds of Australia who generously gave of their time and allowed me to obtain and use information;

Susie Shears, Director of the Victorian Tapestry Workshop, and the wonderful weavers and administrative team who made me feel so welcome;

Jennifer Turpin & Michaelie Crawford; Denise Sprynskyj & Peter Boyd; John Vella; Geoffrey Ricardo; Sue Batten and John Dicks and their contribution to the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition;

Associate Professor Margaret Barrett who is an inspirational role model;

Tammy Jones who is a wonderful friend and computer guru;

and finally, but certainly not least, to my husband Martin Kerby who has constantly encouraged and supported my academic endeavours from near and afar and loved me through it all.

Abstract

Though collaboration has been evident throughout the history of art, the purpose of this study was to examine the process and structures of collaborative artistic practices that have re-emerged in the contemporary art world. In framing this research various factors which have impacted on the re-emergence of collaborative artistic practices – the role of the artist, the perception of art making, and societal and cultural influences were also considered. Three case studies were utilised for this research: the Parliament House Embroidery (1984 – 1988); the Victorian Tapestry Workshop (1976 -); and the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition (2006). The extensive documentation and archival resources available affected the choice of the first two case studies, with the third being chosen due to my curatorial role in the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition. All of the case studies have been publicly acknowledged as being the result of a collaborative process. Each of the case studies provided insights into the process of collaboration and the characteristics necessary for a successful and sustainable artistic collaboration. The data gained through observation, interviews, and collation as well as QSR computer software analysis from the selected case studies, when coupled with information gained from current literature on artistic collaborative practices was utilised to formulate a model for collaboration. These findings were compared and contrasted to collaborative processes operating in various sectors such as the arts, technology, the community and education. The findings present an extensive list of factors and characteristics which are essential in initiating and maintaining a collaborative process, resulting in a recommended arts model for those wishing to engage in the collaborative process.

Table of Contents: Volume 1

<i>Declaration of Originality</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>Permission to Copy</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>Abstract</i>	<i>v</i>
<i>Table of Contents: Volume 1</i>	<i>vi</i>
<i>Tables & Figures</i>	<i>ix</i>
Tables	ix
Figures	ix
Chapter 1: Studies of Collaboration	1
Background to the Study	3
Changing Role of the Artist	4
Perceptions of Art Making	4
Groups and Leadership	5
Main Objective of the Study	6
Research Questions	6
Design of the Study	7
Qualitative Research Rationale	7
Case Study Attributes	7
Phenomenology	8
Methods	8
Study Participants	9
Contemporary Art Context	11
Timeline for the Study	12
Definition of Terms	13
Limitations of the Study	13
Conclusion	14
Chapter 2: Understandings of Collaboration	15
What is Collaboration?	15
Collaboration and Contemporary Art	28
Community & Public Art	34
Social and Cultural Influences on Collaborative Practice	40
The Changing Role of the Artist	43
Art Making and Gender	49
The Perception of Art Making	56
Collaboration and Relationships	59
Social systems and Art	65
Individuality, Ego, Authorship	73
Conclusion	75
Chapter 3: Practices of Collaboration	78
The Arts	78
Technology	83
Community	89
Education	94
Cross-sector Collaboration	98
Group Dynamics	101
Group Work and Leadership	103
Creativity and Collaboration	106
Groups and Collaboration	108

<i>Collaborative Models in the Arts</i>	122
<i>Conclusion</i>	128
Chapter 4: Investigating Collaboration	129
<i>Case Study & Phenomenology</i>	130
<i>Validity</i>	135
<i>Data Analysis</i>	137
<i>Reflexivity</i>	139
<i>The Purpose of the Case Studies</i>	141
<i>The Participants</i>	143
<i>The Researcher</i>	143
<i>Methods and Techniques</i>	147
<i>Implementation of Interviews</i>	153
<i>Parliament House Embroidery</i>	153
<i>Victorian Tapestry Workshop</i>	153
<i>Partnership or Perish? exhibition</i>	155
<i>Recording the Interviews</i>	156
<i>Ethical Issues</i>	156
<i>Procedure</i>	157
<i>Recruitment of Participants</i>	158
<i>Withdrawal of Consent</i>	158
<i>The Role of the Researcher</i>	158
<i>Trustworthiness and Credibility</i>	159
<i>Data Analysis</i>	160
<i>Case Study: The Parliament House Embroidery (PHE)</i>	162
<i>Data Gathering</i>	163
<i>Case Study: The Victorian Tapestry Workshop (VTW)</i>	164
<i>Data Gathering</i>	164
<i>Case Study: Partnership or Perish? A study of artistic collaborations (POP)</i>	165
<i>Data Gathering</i>	165
<i>Conclusion</i>	165
Chapter 5: Case Study - Parliament House Embroidery (PHE)	168
<i>Forming</i>	168
<i>Storming</i>	173
<i>Norming</i>	193
<i>Performing</i>	197
<i>Responses to the Interview Schedule</i>	199
<i>Collaboration</i>	199
<i>Gender</i>	208
<i>Acknowledgement</i>	212
<i>Phenomenological Essence</i>	215
<i>Conclusion</i>	216
Chapter 6: Case Study – Victorian Tapestry Workshop (VTW)	218
<i>Forming</i>	219
<i>Storming</i>	221
<i>Norming</i>	223
<i>Performing</i>	226
<i>Responses to the Interview Schedule</i>	233
<i>Collaboration</i>	233
<i>Gender</i>	243
<i>Acknowledgment</i>	246
<i>Phenomenological Essence</i>	246
<i>Conclusion</i>	248
Chapter 7: Curatorial Case Study – Partnership or Perish? exhibition (POP)	250
<i>Forming: Academy Gallery Director – Malcom Bywaters</i>	250
<i>Norming: Academy Gallery Director – Malcom Bywaters</i>	251
<i>Forming: The VTW & Geoffrey Ricardo</i>	252
<i>Norming: The VTW & Geoffrey Ricardo</i>	254

<i>Performing: Academy Gallery Director – Malcom Bywaters</i>	254
<i>Performing: VTW and Geoffrey Ricardo</i>	258
<i>Forming: S!X - Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd</i>	259
<i>Norming: S!X - Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd</i>	263
<i>Performing: S!X - Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd</i>	263
<i>Forming: Turpin Crawford Studio - Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford</i>	265
<i>Norming: Turpin Crawford Studio - Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford</i>	271
<i>Performing: Turpin Crawford Studio - Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford</i>	272
<i>Forming: John Vella and Tasmanian students</i>	273
<i>Norming: John Vella and Tasmanian Students</i>	277
<i>Performing: John Vella and Tasmanian Students</i>	278
<i>Responses to the Interview Schedule: Victorian Tapestry Workshop & Geoffrey Ricardo</i>	279
<i>Collaboration</i>	280
<i>Gender</i>	286
<i>Acknowledgment</i>	286
<i>Responses to the Interview Schedule: S!X – Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd</i>	286
<i>Collaboration & Gender</i>	287
<i>Acknowledgment</i>	289
<i>Responses to the Interview Schedule: Turpin Crawford Studio – Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford</i>	291
<i>Collaboration</i>	291
<i>Gender</i>	293
<i>Acknowledgment</i>	298
<i>Responses to the Interview Schedule: John Vella and Tasmanian Students</i>	299
<i>Collaboration</i>	299
<i>Gender</i>	301
<i>Acknowledgment</i>	301
<i>Phenomenological Essence</i>	303
<i>Conclusion</i>	305
Chapter 8: Results and Discussion of Findings	307
<i>Research Question: Why do people engage in collaborative practice?</i>	308
<i>Research Question: What are the key factors inherent in sustaining a successful collaborative practice?</i>	317
<i>Why has collaboration only recently re-emerged as one vehicle for contemporary artistic practice?</i>	328
Conclusion	342
References	357

Tables & Figures

Tables

<i>Table 1: Mattessich, Murray-Close & Monsey (2004, p. 61).</i>	17
<i>Table 2: Factors Influencing the Success of Collaboration (Mattessich, et al., 2004, pp 8 - 10).</i>	19
<i>Table 3: Factors Required for Artistic Collaboration (Adapted from John-Steiner, 2000).</i>	25
<i>Table 4: Collaborative patterns: Roles, values and working methods (John-Steiner, 2000).</i>	25
<i>Table 5: Stages of Collaborative Circle Development (Adapted from Farrell, 2001)</i>	27
<i>Table 6: Collaborative Circle Leadership (Farrell, 2001)</i>	27
<i>Table 7: Community Life Cycle (Wenger et al., 2002)</i>	34
<i>Table 8: Tuckman's four stages of teamwork (1965)</i>	101
<i>Table 9: Collaborative Model vs. Hierarchical Model (Hargrove, 1998, p. 67)</i>	105
<i>Table 10: Model of Facilitative Leadership (Straus, 2002)</i>	111
<i>Table 11: Four Stages of Collaboration (Adapted from Winer & Ray, 1994)</i>	114
<i>Table 12: Maximising the potential of Great Groups (Adapted from Bennis and Biederman, 1997)</i>	117
<i>Table 13: Common Characteristics of Communities of Practice (Saint-Onge & Wallace, 2003)</i>	119
<i>Table 14: Overview of the State and Territory sections in the Parliament House Embroidery</i>	176
<i>Table 15: Advantages to working collaboratively from the Partnership or Perish? case studies</i>	316
<i>Table 16: Key characteristics of successful collaboration identified through the case studies</i>	327
<i>Table 17: Reasons for the re-emergence of collaboration</i>	335
<i>Table 18: Checklist of questions for the Forming and Storming Stages of the collaborative process</i>	351
<i>Table 19: Checklist of questions for the Norming and Performing Stages of the collaborative process</i>	352

Figures

<i>Figure 1: Social Systems Model of the Art world (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996)</i>	113
<i>Figure 2: Complementary Model for Collaboration (Adapted from John-Steiner, 2000)</i>	124
<i>Figure 3: Integrative Model for Collaboration (Adapted from John-Steiner, 2000)</i>	126
<i>Figure 4: Management Structure of the Victorian Tapestry Workshop, January 2005</i>	224
<i>Figure 5: Image for Partnership or Perish? exhibition calendar and invitation</i>	256
<i>Figure 6: QSR N6 Nodes used to code data from interviews and email correspondence</i>	308
<i>Figure 7: Characteristics for Collaborative Model based on Case Study data</i>	344
<i>Figure 8: Suggested model of collaboration for arts practitioners</i>	349

Chapter 1: Studies of Collaboration

Collaboration is a term which has been increasingly used across a range of sectors including the arts, management, health, education and defence. The term collaboration has been generally considered to be a process engaged in by more than two people; but this is where general agreement of the meaning ends and misuse of the term begins. Many people purport to work collaboratively when in fact the process is more cooperative, meaning there is less personal and financial risk (White & O'Brien, 1999; Winer & Ray, 2000). Engaging in a collaborative process is about embarking on a relationship which relies on the positive aspects of human nature to work effectively. Although there are many texts, particularly in management or business which describe group work strategies (Brown, 1991; Chalmers, 1992; DuBrin, 1997; McDermott, 2002; Reed & Garvin, 1983; Toseland & Rivas, 1998), it has been only recently that the human aspect of working together has been emphasised (Barrentine, 1993b; Buzzanell, 1994; Clift, Veal, Holland, Johnson, & McCarthy, 1995; Farrell, 2001; John-Steiner, 2000; Paulus & Nijstad, 2003; Rosener, 1990; Rost, 1991; Winer & Ray, 2000). One interesting aspect of these texts has been the majority of them have been written by women, who have identified feminine attributes which can encourage groups to interact with one another more effectively. These texts have subverted traditional hierarchical relationships to advocate a more devolved style of leadership.

Cooperative and collaborative processes are beginning to play an important part in global efforts to control pollution, population, and more recently the threat of terrorism. Technological advances in communication have resulted in a greater awareness of the global community in which we live and interact. Traditional concepts and roles are being overturned at a progressively faster rate, resulting in us living in a period of 'necessary interdependence,' (Bruffee, 1993, p. 21). As societies increasingly become more interdependent, their members become aware of and are more willing to accommodate differences. In keeping with this accommodation, texts which encourage a more collaborative approach in a variety of sectors have also become more prolific (Acker, 1990; Barrentine, 1993b; Bennis & Biderman, 1997; Brown, 1991; Bruffee, 1993; Buzzanell, 1994; Chalmers, 1992; Clift et al., 1995; Engestrom, 1994; Fisher, 2005; Gergen, 2005; Hargrove, 1998; Henry, 1996;

Hetchcock, 2005; John-Steiner, 2000; Littleton, Miell, & Faulkner, 2004; Manning & Haddock, 1989; Montuori & Purser, 1999b, 1999c; Paulus & Nijstad, 2003; Pike, Brent, MacEachren, Gahegan, & Chaoqing, 2005; Rosener, 1990; Rost, 1991; Simonton, 1988; Straus, 2002; Travis, 1997; Webb, 2001; Weisberg, 1993; White & O'Brien, 1999; Winer & Ray, 2000).

Socialisation in Western society emphasises competitiveness and self-promotion (Barrentine, 1993b; Burns, 1978; Clark, 1996; Hellriegel, Slocum, & Woodman, 1992; Rogoff, 2003; Sharpnack, 2005; Sowers, 1983). Rogoff (2003) described children's participation in the everyday formats and routines of cultural institutions and traditions as engagement with their underlying cultural assumptions (p. 234). She noted that these are often taken for granted without question. Such an environment that prioritises competition does not prepare individuals wishing to undertake a collaborative process. One reflection of both this and the extent of collaborative practices can be found in contemporary art (Close, 2004; Green, 2001; Montuori & Purser, 1995; NGA, 1996; PHEC, 1988; Walwin, 1997). An understanding of the creative and innovative collaborative practices utilised in contemporary art,¹ particularly in relation to creativity in problem solving, have wider relevance in contemporary society (Bennis & Biderman, 1997; McCabe, 1984; McDermott, 2002; Montuori & Purser, 1999b, 1999c; Thousand, Villa, & Nevin, 1994; Webb, 2005).

Historically, collaboration has been evident throughout the history of art (Campbell, 1995; Chadwick, 1985; Chadwick & De Courtivron, 1993; Cole, 1983, 1995; Cumming & Kaplan, 1991; Gadd & Wallis, 2002; Greenberg, 1979; Lightbrown, 1980; Maginnis, 1995; Mancinelli, 1994; McCabe, 1984; Oesterreicher-Mollwo, 1978; Raaberg, 1990; Renard, 1919; Riese Hubert, 1998; Rubin Suleiman, 1993; Shepard, 2005; Staley, 1906; Unwin, 1963; Weltge, 1998). However through a number of factors the artist, or to be more precise, the artisan became separated from their craft origins. This situation culminated in the nineteenth century's romantic view of the artist; a view which also later evolved into the heroic myth of the artist – white,

¹ A number of contemporary artists are working cross disciplinary and often with new technology. The Australian Network for Art and Technology (ANAT) is one organisation which seeks to provide a connection between art and culture, science and technology. ANAT seeks media artists working in screen, sound, installation and performance to create opportunities for connection, collaboration, innovation, research and development both nationally and internationally.

male and angst ridden. Consequently the artist was almost obliged to separate themselves from society to preserve their perceived status of genius (Becker, 1982; Callen, 1979, 1984 - 85; Holmes, 2004; Matchett, 2005; Montuori & Purser, 1995, 1999b; Shroder, 1961).

The reacceptance of collaboration in contemporary art has been of particular interest, because the collaborative process challenges the perceived stereotype of the artist. There has been a perception in the art world that working with someone else dilutes the eventual product or outcome of the process. The purpose of this study has been to examine the process of collaboration in artistic practice, and to investigate why it has become acceptable in the art world in recent times, so that one model for artistic collaborative practice may be developed. Although many artists now feel more comfortable engaging in a collaborative process, it was apparent that many did not understand the nature of collaboration. This therefore impeded their ability to engage in it more effectively. This study will describe common characteristics of collaborative practice from selected case studies of contemporary artistic practice, and compare them with characteristics of collaborative processes operating in other sectors. A model of collaborative practice will be developed from the arts and other sectors, to create a link which can provide a guide for those in the arts who are considering engaging in collaborative practice.

Background to the Study

There were a number of important issues which framed this study. The first issue was the historical change in the status of the artist which resulted in a hierarchical separation of the artisan or craftsperson from that of the artist. This revised perception of the artist also affected the way that art and craft were viewed, with craft being seen as the lesser of the two. Historically, this issue was also linked with certain forms of making which were relegated to particular genders. This compounding factor influenced the perceived status of both art and craft work. An investigation of collaborative practice in other sectors has also revealed the effect of social and historical changes, which are particularly evident in such areas as management. Issues concerning group work and leadership have increasingly referred to less hierarchical approaches with a more devolved style of leadership operating. There are now an increasing number of texts which celebrate the feminine attributes of leadership; these

attributes are increasingly being accepted as essential factors in the collaborative process (Barrentine, 1993a, 1993b; Buzzanell, 1994, 2000).

Changing Role of the Artist

The transition from artisan to artist was a gradual process from the old craft guild system towards the modern fine art system. Shiner (2001) contended that the word artist originated in the Renaissance. He explained that prior to, and even during this time, the word artist did not exist. Artisans were identified by their craft which included such skills as painting, sculpting and/or illuminating. The artisans belonged to craft guilds which established quality standards, determined prices and oversaw apprenticeships; however, by the middle of the fifteenth century employment opportunities began to narrow and the guilds became smaller and less effective. Prior to the Industrial Revolution families formed the dominant unit of production in society. Many artisans therefore worked from home. As industrialisation increased home production became less viable, and a separation between the home and the workplace became more apparent. The distinction between the role of artist and artisan began to emerge during the Renaissance. However, it would take until the eighteenth century, during the period of Romanticism, before the modern definition of the artist became fully fledged.²

Perceptions of Art Making

In the late nineteenth century artists were endeavouring to create 'art for art's sake,' a philosophy which emphasised the aesthetic of the work rather than a description of the actual subject. They were however, hampered, by the tradition of the guilds which were predominately viewed as craft, group, and society-based. The artist, therefore, had to distance themselves from these elements in order to be perceived as an artist. Craft work was effectively placed at a lesser level than art and any interaction with other people, much less society as a whole, was denigrated. Almost parallel to this metamorphosis was the emergence of the Victorian ideal of domesticity which culminated in women being portrayed as the spiritual guardian of the home. This

² The Romantic art movement flourished in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The image of the artist during this period was of one who fought against a hostile environment, unable to come to terms with it. This movement was over by the mid-nineteenth century, but the Romantic spirit which represented a revolt against conservatism, moderation, insincerity and its insistence on the imagination in artistic expression is evident in contemporary art.

societal expectation effectively separated women from the work place and placed craft work – created to make the home more comfortable – in this sphere as well.

Bermingham (1992) stated that ‘the denigration of craft in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries by both industrial capitalism and the Academy facilitated its feminisation, and this feminisation of craft ensured its marginalisation as ‘women’s art’ (p. 162). Nochlin (2003) described the social order from the moment we enter the world as one entrenched in meaningful symbols, signs, and signals, and one which has linked women with domesticity as a genetic and spiritual birthright. This socially contrived domestic context reached its pinnacle in the Arts and Craft Movement during the Victorian era, yet its effects through many other sectors, and particularly in the way art making is viewed, are still evident today.³

Groups and Leadership

The notion of identity, which has also been described in the art world as ego or authorship, has been celebrated at the expense of other people who have worked in a collaborative process with the artist. The mostly antisocial characteristics⁴ inherent in the creative individual or ‘lone genius’ myth, have been perpetuated since the identification of the role of the artist in the late nineteenth century. Though acknowledging that artists do work individually, this study was structured to focus on those artists whose method of work engaged in collaborative practices. To highlight the differences between the ‘individual’ and the ‘collaborative’ artist it was therefore necessary to examine group and leadership theory evident in sectors such as business and management. Many traditional texts such as *Organisational Behaviour* (1992), and *Basic Groupwork* (2000) describe factual information about groups, such as how they are formed, the different types of dynamics that may be evident, and when groups are necessary; however, they do not mention the intensity of relationship evident in groups that engage in collaborative processes. Although recent texts such as *Managing and Organisations* (2005) and *Organisational Behaviour* (2003) do acknowledge the term collaboration, they do so in the context of purely strategic, monetary alliances. The traditional hierarchical approach inherent in many companies

³ Parker and Pollock (1981) argued that the ‘domestication of women’ in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century removed them from the public domain of art.

⁴ Rickards and DeCock (1999) suggest that these antisocial characteristics such as being a revolutionary, a loner and a destroyer of traditional institutions are incompatible with the skills required to engage in collaboration.

is being reconsidered through the use of terms such as transformational leadership. This form of leadership emphasises concern for people. This does not mean that leadership does not exist, but has instead given way to a more devolved style of leadership which encourages discussion and input from a greater range of people. A number of recent texts advocated that traditionally associated feminine attributes such as nurturing and caring have influenced this approach (Barrentine, 1993a, 1993b; Buzzanell, 1994, 2000; Coughlin, Wingard, & Hollihan, 2005; Fisher, 2005; Gergen, 2005; Henry, 1996; Rost, 1991; Whiteley, 2005) .

Main Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the process of collaboration in artistic practice. Collaborative processes will be examined in selected Australian arts practices, and these descriptions will contribute towards the creation of a model of collaborative arts practice.

By studying a number of case studies which have been described as collaborative, I have attempted to determine the common characteristics necessary for a successful and sustainable engagement in this process. These data were primarily gathered from interviews and observation, in addition to artefacts and documents. The resulting analysis will provide a model for collaboration which can be used in the arts to facilitate more extensive engagement between artists, with other sectors and society.

Research Questions

By choosing case studies which publicly acknowledge the importance of collaboration in their outcomes, and collecting data concerning the social and cultural contexts in which they exist, this study proposes to answer the following questions:

- Why do people engage in collaborative practice?
- What are the key factors inherent in sustaining a successful collaborative practice?
- Why has collaboration only recently re-emerged as one vehicle for contemporary artistic practice?

Design of the Study

Qualitative Research Rationale

Qualitative research was utilised as a method of inquiry in which researchers obtain data from participants, usually in their own settings. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) described qualitative research as analysing people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions. Tesch (1990, cited in Gray & Malins, 2004) likened qualitative research to a form of art. He noted that the question of validity does not depend on replicable outcomes, but on a data 'reduction' process that leads to findings:

The result of the analysis is, in fact, a representation in the same sense that an artist can, with a few strokes of the pen, create an image of a face that we would recognise if we saw the original in a crowd. The details are lacking, but a good 'reduction' not only selects and emphasises the essential features, it retains the vividness of the personality in the rendition of the face. In the same way a successful qualitative data reduction, while removing us from the freshness of the original, presents us instead with an image that we can grasp as the 'essence', where we otherwise would have been flooded with detail and left with hardly a perception of the phenomena at all (p. 130).

Qualitative research allows the researcher to understand social phenomena from the participants' perspectives, and was therefore ideally suited to the case study methodology and phenomenological inquiry used in this study. The social phenomenon of collaboration was investigated through an examination of three case studies, each with a unique context. Data has been collected, analysed and presented in a narrative form to provide the reader with the essence of each of the case studies leading to an understanding of how the collaborative process has operated in each group.

Case Study Attributes

The proposed objective of this study was to identify what collaboration is, to describe collaboration in selected Australian arts practices, and to contribute towards the

creation of a model for collaborative arts practice. The Parliament House Embroidery (PHE), the Victorian Tapestry Workshop (VTW) and the *Partnership or Perish?* (POP) case studies were well suited to this methodology. Case study methodology was chosen because it is 'a way of organising social data for the purpose of viewing social reality' (Best & Kahn, 2006, p. 259). Although case study is preferred when examining contemporary events, there was also scope to include historical events. This is due to case study's unique strength in being able to deal with a variety of evidence, including documents, artefacts, interviews and observations. Two of the case studies investigated, the PHE and the VTW, have utilised historical documentary evidence combined with recent interview data. Yin (2003) noted that case studies do not always need to include direct detailed observations as a source of evidence, but can combine a range of evidences.

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is the study of an individual's life world as they experience it. As both a philosophy and a research method, phenomenology aims for a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of everyday experiences. The aim of phenomenology is to understand the experience. In the context of this study asking questions which investigated the experience of collaboration, and the purpose of people engaging in it, were essential to understanding the phenomena more deeply. In effect the researcher seeks to study the essences inherent in the phenomena, through the participants' experiences. Most importantly, phenomenology is a quest for what it means to be human. Munhall (1994) argued the more deeply a person understands an experience, the more fully and uniquely he or she becomes human. Phenomenological descriptions provide examples for the reader to enable them to see the deeper significance or structure of the lived experience being described.

Methods

The multi-method approach of case study methodology was utilised for this study and provided both depth and breadth to the data gathered. The qualitative methods and their relationship to the study questions are outlined in chapter four of the study, and include:

Structured interviews

Data collected through interviews was completed using an interview schedule, described in chapter four, relating to the process of collaboration pertinent to that case study. Most of the interviews were conducted on an individual basis; however particular circumstances necessitated some small group interviews. The interviews were conducted personally or by phone dependant on factors such as time and distance. Interview data was generated with individual and group participants in the case study settings where possible. These interviews sought to assess participant's perceptions of collaboration in their group practice and the factors which sustained it. The interviews were transcribed and returned to the participants for checking and modification if required.

Observation

Observation was utilised to gather information concerning the collaborative process evident in the interaction between the participants and from the context in which they were working. These observations were gathered in the form of field notes for use in the study.

Documents and artefacts

A range of documents and artefacts were analysed including texts, catalogues, artworks, and email correspondence. This material was used to confirm information from the interviews. Published material concerning the collaborative process pertaining to the artists assisted in establishing whether this position was widely held in the art world.

Participant Review

Each participant interviewed for this study was sent a hard copy of the interview transcript and given an opportunity to modify, clarify or withdraw any information. This participant review process helped to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the data collected.

Study Participants

Participants in this study were selected from three case studies consisting of: The Parliament House Embroidery (1984 – 1988); the Victorian Tapestry Workshop

(1976 -); and the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition (2006). The participants of the PHE were comprised of the State and Territory supervision leaders of the Parliament House Embroidery, although at times other members were present and contributed to the interview. The Parliament House Embroidery (PHE) was created during the years 1984 – 1988, although planning and preparation had begun much earlier. The average age of the embroidery guild members at the time of the PHE's creation was from forty to fifty years of age. Many of the members are now reaching their senior years. Each of the interview participants was identified as having completed embroidery on the PHE. The interviews with the embroidery guild members were held at the guild headquarters of the Tasmanian, South Australian, Victorian and Queensland guilds. Due to financial and geographical factors two interviews were conducted by phone with members of the Australian Capital Territory, Western Australia, and written responses were obtained from the supervisors of the New South Wales and Northern Territory guilds. In addition to the guild members, the designer of the PHE, Professor Kay Lawrence, was also interviewed in Adelaide. All of the participants concerned with the PHE were very proud of their contribution and willing to discuss their involvement.

The Victorian Tapestry Workshop participants predominately consisted of the weavers who were working during the time of my artist residency in 2004. I obtained permission from the Director of the VTW, and spent time during the residency observing the particular process engaged in by the weavers. The weavers were at different stages of expertise ranging from apprentice to senior weaver, with one of the weavers having worked at the VTW since its opening in 1976. Although the weavers were required to continue working throughout the day to reach their weaving quota, they were quite happy to discuss their process with me as we sat on the weaving platform while they continued to work. All of the weavers employed at the VTW have a fine arts degree and are then apprenticed to learn about the technical skills required to become a production weaver. The Director of the VTW, Susie Shears, was also interviewed for this study on a subsequent visit in 2005. A good level of rapport has been established with the VTW resulting in the Director opening the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition in July 2006, and also loaning a tapestry for the duration of the exhibition.

The *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition showcased the work of contemporary Australian artists who use the collaborative process as a predominant part of their art making. Each of the artists was sent a formal letter of invitation to participate in the exhibition. A final selection of four groups of artists which best complemented the premise of the exhibition was chosen. Interviews were conducted during studio visits with each of the artists. As part of a phenomenological approach to the exhibition, I also sought further ethical clearance in addition to the original forms to use email correspondence between the artists, the gallery director and myself to further describe the process which took place during the creation of this exhibition. This is in addition to catalogues, and electronic sources such as websites and field notes. The catalogue produced for the exhibition is also included as part of this case study.

In accordance with research protocols, each participant was given an information and informed consent sheet which described the study and provided contact details if they required any further information. The forms had been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network. (Appendixes 1A & 1B.) Each of the participants was sent a transcript of their interview to modify or clarify as necessary.

Contemporary Art Context

Collaboration has become increasingly accepted in the contemporary art world as evidenced in recent exhibitions, where joint authorship through partnerships, groups and collectives is acknowledged. Collaboration has also been encouraged through various grants which aim to bring disciplines together such as art and science.⁵ Although the stereotype of the individual artist genius has undergone a reconfiguring due to social and cultural changes, it still appears that the collaborative process remains somewhat elusive to many artists. Some artists claim that they work collaboratively, when in actuality they have outsourced work to skilled artisans to complete. There has been a general misconception about the word collaboration because it has been used to describe a range of working practices which are less intensive. There also existed an uneasy tension in which contemporary art has been

⁵ The Australia Council's New Media Arts Board (NMAB) has created the Synapse Industry Partner Grants. This program is open to artists and scientists in Australia who propose collaborative research projects to the Australia Research Council's Linkage Grants category.

urged towards business models, evident in the rise of the ‘creative industries’, and a call for art to be made comprehensible to the public. Chiapello (2004) noted that the business sector is realising the value of innovation and creativity, even likening business attributes to artistic ones:

Management literature has gone out of its way to explain that while wage labourers may have lost job security in the latest transformation of the world of work, they have gained more creative, more varied, more autonomous labour, closer to an artistic lifestyle (p. 593).

James Strong, the Australia Council’s chairperson, was seen by many people in the arts community as reinforcing the Australian Government’s desire for the arts and the business world to work more closely together. Perkin (2006a) noted: ‘The Government remains the chief provider, but increasingly cultural organisations are being encouraged to forge relationships with the corporate sector’ (p. 19). Chiapello (2004) noted that this co-optation of the role of the artist to provide an active critique of society is slowly being lessened, because it has been gradually commodified by the business sector. Mari (2001) described the essential nature of art as reconciling ‘pleasure and knowledge in an illogical way – not mathematical, but poetical’ (p. 106). This approach to art therefore may not easily align itself with other sectors that value pre-determined tasks and expected outcomes. Although some artists work in a very precise way, they still value spontaneity and the element of chance, which cannot be considered in particular sectors.⁶ Collaboration has always required clear communication, whether it is amongst artists, and/or with other sectors. Engaging in a collaborative process may therefore be seen by some in the arts as betraying the essential nature of art itself.

Timeline for the Study

Contact with the participants was made between 2004 and 2006. After an initial approach to the Director of the VTW I was encouraged to submit an artist in residence application and was accepted for November/December 2004. Towards the end of the residency I sought permission from those weavers willing to be interviewed for this

⁶ This would include a sector such as medicine in which spontaneity could result in a life-threatening or fatal outcome.

study. At this time eight of the weavers were interviewed, and in October 2005 I also interviewed the Director of the VTW. I conducted interviews with the embroidery guilds from November 2004 to September, 2006. I visited the Tasmanian guild in November 2004 and interviewed five of the embroidery guild members. This was the only state in which it was not possible to interview the supervisors; however the number of members who were available to discuss their involvement with the PHE more than compensated for this. During November 2004 I also interviewed the supervisor and two other members from the South Australian Guild, in addition to the designer of the PHE. In June 2005 I was able to interview the two supervisors from the Queensland Guild, who had responsibility for different stages of their section of the PHE. During October 2005 I was able to interview the supervisor from the Victorian Guild. In May 2006 I conducted a phone interview with the supervisor of the ACT Guild and also another member who had responsibility for the construction of all of the state and territory sections into a seamless panel. During September 2006 I conducted a phone interview with the supervisor from Western Australia. Due to ill health and a recent bereavement, the supervisors of the NSW and NT guilds provided written responses to the interview schedule. Four of the artists from the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition were interviewed during studio visits conducted in October 2005, with another two being interviewed by phone in May 2006. The two VTW weavers involved in the exhibition had previously been interviewed about their interaction in December 2004.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study the word *collaboration* was defined as a durable, intense and pervasive relationship which is built up over time. People who collaborate are fully committed to the relationship, and there are well defined communication channels which operate on all levels.

Limitations of the Study

In order to undertake this research it was necessary to locate groups who have publicly acknowledged, and are acknowledged as collaborators. This was determined through joint authorship on exhibition documentation, in catalogues and other text based material. As part of this study it was also necessary to examine groups who had been working together for a substantial period of time. Although a number of

contemporary artists have used collaborative processes in their work, they have often been for short periods of time. Therefore different sampling issues arose in each of the case studies. The Parliament House Embroidery and Victorian Tapestry Workshop are both textiles based, and the *Partnership or Perish?* case study consists of contemporary artists working in a range of media. This purposive sampling, described by Denzin and Lincoln (2000) sought out groups and settings where and for whom the collaborative process was most likely to occur. Most of the participants were predominately women in the first two case studies, although there was one male weaver, who was again represented with two males in the exhibition. Time necessitated a smaller group sampling for this research, and given the nature of the investigation the participants were all based in Australia.

Conclusion

This study was based on seventeen participants, who were predominately state and territory supervisors of the *Parliament House Embroidery*, nine members of the Victorian Tapestry Workshop, and eight artists in the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition. These thirty-four participants were interviewed and observed to ascertain the extent of their collaborative practice. The interviews were analysed to determine common characteristics across the three case studies and compared against common characteristics in other sectors. The methodological procedures chosen for this research were used to identify collaboration, and have described its presence in each of the case studies. This information was then analysed and contributed towards the creation of a model of collaborative arts practice.

Chapters two and three will examine the literature which has informed this study, including distinctions made between the words cooperation, coordination and collaboration; characteristics of collaboration; the way collaboration is described in a number of sectors; the changing role of the artist and perceptions of art; creativity; group work dynamics and models of collaboration.

Chapter 2: Understandings of Collaboration

The search for literature related to this study was conducted through three main interrelated themes: the role of the artist, the perception of art making in the context of social and cultural factors, and group work practices. These themes provided a context against which the collected data could be compared and contrasted. This was particularly important in texts which described the findings of collaborative working arrangements on a larger scale than the scope of this study allowed.

There were limited primary sources whose main focus is that of collaboration itself, however in recent years texts have emerged in sectors such as arts (Green, 2001; VTW, 2005), leadership (Clift et al., 1995; Coughlin et al., 2005), education (Chalmers, 1992; Littleton et al., 2004), and community (Hetchcock, 2005; Montuori & Purser, 1999b, 1999c) which recognise the inherent value of collaborative practice. This recognition reflected a growing concern in the global community relating to how cooperative and collaborative efforts are required to build a sustainable future as evidenced by global efforts to control pollution, population and more recently, the threat of terrorism. Traditional concepts and roles are being overturned at an increasing rate. This necessary interdependence is in opposition to the socially constructed Western belief in individualism; which in the arts is referred to as the 'lone genius' myth (Chadwick, 1996; Kirby, 1992; Shepard, 2005; Shiner, 2001; Weisberg, 1993). This myth, which described the lone genius as predominately male, white and angst-ridden, has been perpetuated since the role of the artist began to evolve from that of the artisan (Callen, 1984 - 85; Shiner, 2001).

What is Collaboration?

The word *collaboration* has been generally considered to be a process engaged in by more than two people; but this is where general agreement of the meaning ends and misuse of the term begins. It was first recorded as being spoken in 1860,¹ eventually

¹ The word 'collaboration' was recorded in C. Reade. *Eight Commandment*, 374: "It is plain that collaboration was not less ... than it is now in France." In 1889 it appeared in the *Spectator* on 19 Oct, 522/1: "Improvised by that fertile writer in collaboration with MM. Arsène Houssaye and Verteuil." In 1940 it was used in conjunction with WWII in the *Economist* of 26 Oct, 511/2: "Pétain may be outvoted on the question of mitigating the peace terms by some sort of shameful collaboration." In 1941, *Ann Reg. 1940*, 162 recorded: "In foreign affairs the watchword of the Vichy Government was

gaining more common usage during World War II. Collaboration has been defined in two ways as: 1. United labour, co-operation; especially in literary, artistic, or scientific work. 2. Traitorous cooperation with the enemy (Simpson & Weiner, 1989, p. 469). For this study I have examined the first meaning in greater detail as the second is irrelevant to the phenomenon of collaboration under investigation. If we describe collaboration as cooperation, then almost everything we do could be termed collaborative. There is certainly cooperation within the collaborative process, but the actual process is more complicated and personal than describing it as simply cooperating with someone else. There is a particular intensity of effort involved in collaboration, which becomes apparent when the terms cooperation, coordination and collaboration are defined.

collaboration with the German conquerors.” Again in 1945 in A. Huxley’s *Letters* of 2 Apr, 1969, 517: “He has been imprisoned – the only French author, besides Maurras, to have been so treated for collaboration” (Simpson & Weiner, 1989, p. 459).

Cooperation, Coordination, and Collaboration A Table Describing the Elements of Each ³²			
<i>Essential Elements</i>	Cooperation	Coordination	Collaboration
Vision and Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basis for cooperation is usually between individuals but may be mandated by a third party • Organizational missions and goals are not taken into account • Interaction is on an as needed basis, may last indefinitely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual relationships are supported by the organizations they represent • Missions and goals of the individual organizations are reviewed for compatibility • Interaction is usually around one specific project or task of definable length 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment of the organizations and their leaders is fully behind their representatives • Common, new mission and goals are created • One or more projects are undertaken for longer-term results
Structure, Responsibilities, and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships are informal; each organization functions separately • No joint planning is required • Information is conveyed as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations involved take on needed roles, but function relatively independently of each other • Some project-specific planning is required • Communication roles are established and definite channels are created for interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New organizational structure and/or clearly defined and inter-related roles that constitute a formal division of labor are created • More comprehensive planning is required that includes developing joint strategies and measuring success in terms of impact on the needs of those served • Beyond communication roles and channels for interaction, many "levels" of communication are created as clear information is a keystone of success
Authority and Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority rests solely with individual organizations • Leadership is unilateral and control is central • All authority and accountability rests with the individual organization which acts independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority rests with the individual organizations, but there is coordination among participants • Some sharing of leadership and control • There is some shared risk, but most of the authority and accountability falls to the individual organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority is determined by the collaboration to balance ownership by the individual organizations with expediency to accomplish purpose • Leadership is dispersed, and control is shared and mutual • Equal risk is shared by all organizations in the collaboration
Resources and Rewards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources (staff time, dollars, and capabilities) are separate, serving the individual organization's needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources are acknowledged and can be made available to others for a specific project • Rewards are mutually acknowledged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources are pooled or jointly secured for a longer-term effort that is managed by the collaborative structure • Organizations share in the products; more is accomplished jointly than could have been individually

³² Adapted from the works of Martin Blank, Sharon Kagan, Atelia Melaville, and Karen Ray.

Table 1: Mattessich, Murray-Close & Monsey (2004, p. 61).

Winer and Ray (2000) and Mattessich, Murray-Close & Monsey (2004) have clearly described the differences between these terms. Cooperation has been defined as a shorter-term informal relationship that exists without a clearly defined mission,

structure or planning effort. Cooperative partners share information only about the subject at hand. If organisations are involved, they usually retain independent authority and keep resources separate so virtually no risk exists. Coordination is described as a more formal relationship and understanding of the project being undertaken. People involved in a coordinated effort focus their longer-term interaction around a specific effort or program. Coordination requires some planning and division of roles and opens up communication channels between people and organisations. Although authority still rests with individual organisations, everyone's risk increases. At times power can be an issue in a coordinated project, although resources are made available to participants and rewards are shared. Collaboration is described as a more durable and pervasive relationship. A new structure has been created, particularly if organisations are involved, and there is full commitment to the common project. The relationships are maintained by well-defined communication channels and comprehensive planning operating on all levels. The collaborative structure determines authority, and the risk is much greater because each person contributes resources and reputation. The people involved jointly secure resources and share the results and rewards. The literature has revealed that writers use the terms cooperation and coordination interchangeably to describe a collaborative process, without acknowledging the intensity of the relationship described above.

The authors of *Collaboration: What Makes it Work* (Mattessich et al., 2004) defined the word collaboration as:

... a mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organisations to achieve common goals. The relationship includes a commitment to mutual relationships and goals; a jointly developed structure and shared responsibility; mutual authority and accountability for success; and sharing of resources and rewards (p. 4).

The difference between cooperation, coordination and collaboration is in the increasing level of responsibility and trust involved both individually and between participants. Mattessich, et. al. (2004) outlined each stage with the corresponding essential elements: Vision & Relationships; Structure, Responsibilities and Communication; Authority and Accountability; and Resources and Rewards. (See

Table 1 on previous page). The change in leadership, from hierarchical or vertical structure to more devolved or horizontal is well illustrated in this table. Of particular relevance to this study is a description of the twenty success factors required for collaboration to work effectively. The authors derived these factors from an extensive review of 281 studies from the health, social science, education and public affairs sectors. The twenty success factors were grouped into six main categories and are summarised in Table 2:

Categories	Factors
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of collaboration or cooperation in the community • Collaborative group seen as a legitimate leader in the community • Favourable political and social climate
Membership Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual respect, understanding and trust • Appropriate cross section of members • Members see collaboration as in their self-interest • Ability to compromise
Process and Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members share a stake in both process and outcome • Multiple layers of participation • Flexibility • Development of clear roles and policy guidelines • Adaptability • Appropriate pace of development
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and frequent communication • Established informal relationships and communication links
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concrete, attainable goals and objectives • Shared vision • Unique purpose
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient funds, staff, materials and time • Skilled leadership

Table 2: Factors Influencing the Success of Collaboration (Mattessich, et al., 2004, pp 8 - 10).

Collaboration: What Makes It Work provided an important framework to evaluate collaborative ventures against the proposed success factors. The limitations of the text was an overall neglect of the arts, which appeared to suggest there was limited research material pertaining to collaboration in this area. There was also no differentiation between the twenty success factors which were equally weighted. It would appear likely that some factors would be more important than others in particular groups, affected by interpersonal styles, purpose, and whether the arrangement was mandated or voluntary.

Specific texts and articles which investigated the collaborative process in an artistic context included *Explaining Creativity* (Sawyer, 2006), *Collaborative Creativity* (Miell & Littleton, 2004), *The Delicate Essence of Artistic Collaboration* (Wright, 2004), *Group Creativity* (Sawyer, 2003), *Creative Collaboration* (John-Steiner, 2000), and *Collaborative Circles* (Farrell, 2001). These texts strongly linked collaborative processes with creativity. Sawyer (2006) claimed the elements of improvisation, collaboration and communication, which are central to performance, were intrinsically linked to creativity. He also acknowledged that the creative process was unavoidably collaborative, and that research into group creativity must consider group dynamics. In the last few decades there has been increased interest in the scientific understanding of creativity (Taylor & Barron, 1963; Sternberg, 1995). More scientists are now using a sociocultural approach, which combines individualist and contextualist approaches. Sawyer also utilised a combination of these approaches to examine artistic creativity in the visual, writing, music, and acting fields, with everyday creativity in the science and business sectors. His findings concluded that the myth of the genius has affected the way group work has been perceived in all sectors of Western society, and that creativity was collaborative. Although noting that collaboration and creativity are linked, Sawyer did not provide a detailed analysis of the collaborative process itself. His examination of the business and science sector however, confirmed that creativity was increasingly being seen as an important asset to innovation. Additionally, Sawyer's research revealed that the individual genius myth had also operated in the traditional, hierarchical structures of organisations, effectively discouraging collaborative practice.

Miell & Littleton (2004) examined collaborative creativity across a number of areas including: music composition, business, school-based creative activities, fashion design and web-based academic collaborations. Miell and Littleton considered creativity to be a fundamentally social process and emphasised the need to examine it within the cultural, institutional and interpersonal context which supports it. The authors noted that this approach to creativity had increased in academic literature in recent years. Miell and Littleton described the factors affecting the collaborative process as: identity, affect and motivation. A chapter by Moran and John-Steiner (2004) described collaboration as involving 'an intricate blending of skills, temperaments, effort and sometimes personalities to realise a shared vision of

something new and useful' (p. 11). They defined the characteristics of collaboration as: complementarity, tension and emergence. Paradoxically, a further chapter by Ivinson (2004) described collaboration as functioning on individual, interpersonal and socio-cultural planes. Ivinson argued that individual collaboration was possible 'as individuals draw upon traditions and conventions in their everyday practices' (p. 96). Her statement regarding individual collaboration seemed to imply that collaboration was a purely cognitive function, neglecting human interaction. However, Miell and Littleton (2004) contended that creating collaboratively can be a highly emotionally charged and deeply meaningful process. They noted that collaborative creativity is powerful because it has the potential to change the way people conceive of themselves.

Wright (2004) described collaboration as having a 'delicate essence.' He noted that collaboration emerges and flourishes under particular circumstances and that its very nature is paradoxical. Discussing the complexities of acknowledgement, Wright stated 'co-authorship can only be perceived as a hindrance to the sort of possessive individualism underpinning authorship' (p. 534). He further contended that collaboration between artists is often strategic, and teamwork is the exception. Wright claimed that art, and more specifically the art object as a commodity, was the chief obstacle to artistic collaboration. Wright described the basis of the art economy as being reliant on the exchange of object-based artworks which has created the trinity of the 'author-work-public' (p. 545). However, he did not consider artists who have created works that cannot be sold or placed in a gallery context. In order to obtain effective collaboration Wright recommended understanding art in terms of its specific means and not its ends. He concluded by suggesting this can be achieved by fusing artistic competencies with other sectors; yet this recommendation would appear to position art within yet another commodity exchange. Although Wright raised a number of important points regarding art and its role in society, further information regarding the extra-disciplinary collaboration he proposed would have been beneficial. Wright's contention that art created for economic exchange prevented artistic collaboration was interesting, and revealed the complexity of the social and cultural issues underpinning this study.

In *Group Creativity* (2003), Sawyer specifically focused on music and theatre, which drew on studies of performance ensembles to provide insights into collaboration. His examination of improvisational creativity revealed that interactional processes of group activity were similar in all groups. Sawyer described improvisation as exaggerating the key characteristics of all group activity including, process, unpredictability, intersubjectivity, complex communication and emergence. Process was described as the product of a creative endeavour, which is in opposition to the focus on the product itself, such as a performance. As Sawyer noted, group creativity can range from being predictable to unpredictable.² Improvisational creativity was also described as being unpredictable, because of the number of actions that are possible at any one moment. Another defining feature of group activity described by Sawyer was intersubjectivity. He noted this occurred when individual creative acts are open-ended, extendable, and multiply interpretable. Although each participant may have a different interpretation of their role and the group outcome, they are still able to create a unified group performance. The complexity of communication involved in the process of intersubjectivity was due to its constant negotiation, and restructuring. Sawyer described emergence as occurring when the group dynamic was flowing, and the resulting performance was greater than any one individual.

Further, Sawyer revealed that collaboration occurred more readily when the information flow between participants was faster, and there was a rich and deep network of links among team members. In his discussion of group flow, he proposed a method of comparing improvisational genres where the process was the product, with other forms of group creativity which usually have an endpoint or goal. Sawyer proposed that group flow is more likely to occur ‘when the degree to which the group must attain an *extrinsic collective goal* is matched by the number of *pre-existing structures* shared and used by the performers’ [Emphasis in original] (p. 167). He noted that in product-oriented groups, such as business, roles are clearly defined and efficiency was the priority. Improvisational groups however, such as those commonly found in the arts, emphasised process, open communication and a more flexible division of roles. Sawyer concluded that a more unstructured, improvisational group was better suited for problem-finding creativity and that collaboration was more likely

² Sawyer cited courtroom proceedings as being highly ritualised and improvisational theatre as representing the extreme of unpredictable and relatively unscripted conversation.

to occur in these types of groups. The following five characteristics of improvisation were identified by Sawyer: an emphasis on creative process rather than creative product; an emphasis on creative processes that are problem-finding rather than problem-solving; the comparison of art to everyday language use; the importance of collaboration with fellow artists and with the audience; and the role of the ready-made, or cliché, in art.

Sawyer derived these characteristics from a comparison of the aesthetics writings of John Dewey (1859 – 1952) and R. G. Collingwood (1889 – 1943). He argued that at the core of both Dewey's and Collingwood's writings' was a theory of art as group improvisation. To Sawyer it appeared that their theories united in the five characteristics described. However, Sawyer did note that the phenomenon of group creativity required further explanation, in terms of how these characteristics functioned collaboratively. Dewey and Collingwood focused on collaboration between the artist and the audience, and neglected the collaborative process between a community of artists or performers. How the collaborative process could be achieved was not explained by either Dewey or Collingwood. Sawyer proposed that a communication theory of art would be capable of making these distinctions. This theory would include how intersubjectivity was achieved through communication, how group behaviours emerged from individual actions, and how language was used in group situations. However, Sawyer did not articulate how these elements could be utilised in a collaborative process.

Creative Collaboration (2000) examined adult collaboration and group activity from the perspective of cognitive psychology. Through this approach John-Steiner examined the emotional dynamics underpinning successful collaborations. She also acknowledged that the dynamics of collaboration are hidden, and throughout the text challenged the traditional, and at times still prevalent, cultural mode of the solitary creator. In addition, John-Steiner acknowledged that there were two modes of working within collaboration, integrative and complementary. Integrative collaborations can temporarily merge participants' identities. Amongst participants, usually two or three, there is also a profound sense of bonding. Artists forgo their personal style and the collaboration succeeds in transforming their work and personal

life.³ Complementary collaborations embrace differences in training, skill and temperament in order to support a joint outcome through the division of labour. The participants' identities remain distinct during the course of the collaboration.⁴

However, as John-Steiner noted, creative work often combined both integrative and complementary ways of thinking. John-Steiner described large scale collaborations as an example of how integrative and complementary modes can co-exist within one group. Participants in these groups vary in the intensity of their relationships with one another, and may have different disciplinary training and skills. In many artistic fields, these types of groups 'have been influential during periods of stylistic and conceptual transformations' (p. 71).⁵ Although literature on collaboration predominately focused on the cognitive aspects of the process, the emotional factors were often neglected. This limitation was also recognised by John-Steiner who recognised the challenge of effectively integrating intellectual, aesthetic and emotional aspects of creativity within a cultural-historical framework. Through her research she identified the following recurrent emotional themes which existed in collaborations: care and conflict; fusion and separation; trust; individual artistic identity; and partners' negotiations about the ownership of ideas (p. 76). Factors required for participants to successfully engage in collaboration combine both cognitive and emotional factors, and are illustrated in Table 3:

Category	Factors Required for Participants Engaging in Collaboration
Shared vision	Sharing a common goal is crucial to successful collaboration, but in itself may not be sufficient
Complementarity	Having skills and training which complement one another
Identity	Building a resilient sense of identity which is stretched and strengthened in the collaboration
Fascination	Engagement and interest in the ideas of one another, enabling juxtaposition and joint exploration of ideas
Time	Setting aside enough time for a collaboration to adjust to different work styles
Trust	Trusting in each others' sensitivity and support, and continually nourishing this aspect
Risk-taking	Spreading the risks to encourage each participant to take more chances
Willingness	Willingness to adjust a relationship that has lost its original intensity
Support	Ability to listen to each other and 'hear' concerns before they are articulated

³ John-Steiner gave the example of Picasso and Braque and their development of Cubism noting that 'occasionally they achieved such complete fusion of styles that it was impossible to distinguish the work of one from the other' (2000, p. 68).

⁴ The examples of complementary modes of collaboration described by John-Steiner were research in universities and laboratories.

⁵ This would include the advent of major art movements such as Impressionism, Surrealism, Pop Art and Minimalism.

Intensity	Possessing a passion and drive which is unrelenting
Mutual commitment	Sharing a mutual commitment to the collaboration itself
Ownership	Ensuring each participants need for recognition or true equality are met

Table 3: Factors Required for Artistic Collaboration (Adapted from John-Steiner, 2000).

Participants will negotiate these factors, depending on the type of collaboration they are involved in. John-Steiner also identified four patterns of collaboration: distributed, complementary, family and integrative. She proposed that collaboration often started as one pattern, and over time changed into another pattern. Distributed collaboration can be widespread and takes place in casual settings and organised contexts. In these collaborations, participants' roles are informal and voluntary, although some lasting partnerships may be built.

Complementary collaboration has been the most widely practised form, characterised by a division of labour based on complementary expertise, disciplinary knowledge, roles and temperament. This pattern of collaboration allowed participants to negotiate their goals and strive for a common vision. Family collaboration is a mode of interaction in which roles are flexible or may change over time. Participants help each other to evolve in their roles, can take over for each other when required, and are committed to each other for a long time. Integrative collaboration requires a prolonged period of committed activity. This type of collaboration thrives on dialogue, risk taking, and shared vision, and often the participants will construct a common set of beliefs to support them through periods of adversity. John-Steiner noted that some integrative collaborations were motivated by the desire to transform existing knowledge, thought styles, or artistic approaches into new visions (p. 203).

These different patterns are illustrated in Table 4:

Collaborative Patterns	Roles	Values	Working Methods
Distributed	Informal and Voluntary	Similar Interests	Spontaneous and Responsive
Complementary	Clear Division of Labour	Overlapping Values	Discipline-Based Approaches
Family	Flexibility of Roles	Common Vision and Trust	Dynamic Integration of Expertise
Integrative	Braided Roles	Visionary Commitment	Transformative Co-construction

Table 4: Collaborative patterns: Roles, values and working methods (John-Steiner, 2000).

John-Steiner largely used informal case studies and interviews for this research. The disciplinary areas she covered were science and art, and also the areas of gender, inter-generational collaboration and the emotional dynamics of collaboration. This text provided a good overview of collaboration in small groups, but did not adequately discuss large scale collaboration. The text also failed to address the importance of leadership; however this appeared to be more of an issue in large groups.

Farrell (2001) also investigated the dynamics of collaboration in *Collaborative Circles*. He justified his focus on artists and writers because of the visibility of their creative efforts. The collaborations, chosen by Farrell, were limited from the mid to late nineteenth century and drew on letters, journals and interviews to provide a voice for his subjects. The seven stages of circle development which he identified are illustrated in Table 5:

Stages	Characteristics
Formation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly ambitious members of a discipline network who share a common set of attitudes and values and speak the same language • Begin as radial networks centred on a single person • Often form among people marginalised in their fields or blocked from advancement
Rebellion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common antipathy towards authorities in their field • Easier to talk about dislikes rather than likes • Vague about work they value, but clear about work they reject
Quest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move beyond criticising authorities and attempt to forge a shared vision • During this stage members may pair off into dyadic working friendships characterised by trust and instrumental intimacy – ideas emerge from this dialogue without ‘belonging’ to either of the pair
Creative Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants alternate from working alone to working as a group • More self-conscious group identity • Consensus about core elements of the circle’s vision; members follow through on the implication of that vision • Group meetings replenish self-esteem, sharpen understanding of the group’s vision and are opportunities to share solutions to problems • Participants leave meetings with a renewed energy and commitment to work
Collective Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants decide to carry out a large project together, and deal directly with the outside world • Public’s reaction to the circle can have significant consequences for the group • Conflict among participants is likely to increase
Separation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each member gains from the interpersonal relationships in the circle which contributes to more autonomous functioning • Conflicts result from a sense of resentment and betrayal because of confusion about ownership of ideas and inequities in recognition

Nostalgic Reunion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The bonds of affection transcend the divisions over history, intellectual property, and differential success, and the participants support one another during the personal crises of later life
--------------------------	---

Table 5: Stages of Collaborative Circle Development (Adapted from Farrell, 2001)

Farrell's emphasis on leadership qualities, in addition to trust, commitment and intimacy, revealed that although a range of factors can be identified from successful collaborations, without skilled leadership it will ultimately fail. The three types of leaders he identified as being necessary for a collaborative circle were the gatekeeper, the charismatic leader, and the executive manager, which are described in Table 6. The gatekeeper does not actively seek to form a collaborative circle, but brings friends together so they can talk about their ideas. Farrell noted that this kind of leadership can be cultivated in a wide range of people. The charismatic leader can be a novice who attracts the admiration of other novices, and enjoys their attention. They encourage other novices to explore their own inner resources and to explore problems in the discipline. This type of leadership was the most difficult to cultivate. Once the group had stabilised and becomes more cohesive, structural conditions need to be established. The charismatic leader guided the group towards developing a new vision, but often does not have the skills needed to be an executive manager. This type of leader takes on the organisational aspects of the group. However, it is possible to cultivate the skills necessary to perform this role. Farrell noted that one difficult task for a participant was to manage the transfer of leadership from the charismatic leader to the executive manager, without disrupting the solidarity of the group (p. 296).

Type of Leader	Characteristics
Gatekeeper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Builds a friendship circle within the network of novices in a discipline Skilled at reading their own needs and judging compatibility of other people Decides to take action to satisfy a need for companionship, intellectual stimulation and friendship
Charismatic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly narcissistic novice who has extensive expertise Often not linked to a mentor, but more often in open rebellion against the visions of the mentors in the network Restless and discontent, determined to do something new Sets a high standard and has the courage to model the creative process
Executive Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alert for opportunities for marketing the work of the participants Adept at organising others, setting goals, planning strategies of action, scheduling events, monitoring progress toward goals, delegating and coordinating tasks, and balancing budgets

Table 6: Collaborative Circle Leadership (Farrell, 2001)

Farrell also noted that certain cultural conditions, such as gender or ethnic balances, which affect the demographic composition of a discipline, can also result in major changes to collaborative circles.⁶ Resentment can occur if authorship is not properly acknowledged, and was cited as one of the reasons for collaborative circles disintegrating. In addition, shared vision, trust, support and mutual commitment were also cited by Farrell as essential elements in collaborative circles. His links made with group theory, the discussion of circle development and the inclusion of women and other ethnicities was well considered. Farrell's theory of collaborative circles however was tentative, and although the guidelines he suggested would make it likely that a collaborative circle would form, it would take a decade or more to validate his proposition.

Collaboration and Contemporary Art

In the context of this study the emphasis was on collaboration in contemporary art which encompasses a range of disciplines such as painting, drawing, sculpture, printmaking, textiles, photography and a range of new media. Some of the key texts concerning collaboration in the visual arts included catalogues of exhibitions and contemporary art journals, which have sought to provide visual evidence of the collaborative process to support their writing about this complex phenomenon.

Artistic Collaboration in the Twentieth Century (McCabe, 1984) is a catalogue with accompanying essays published for a major exhibition at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C. Although the text was over twenty years old, the historical references to collaboration in the essays, through movements such as Dadaism and Surrealism, were still valid and provided an art history framework for the research. The myth of the solitary artist, particularly in the twentieth century, was the focus of this text. In the essays Robert Hobbs examined artistic collaboration since the 1960s, and David Shapiro the changing perception of aesthetics that have led to the need for community mindedness amongst artists. McCabe stated that the idea of collaboration among visual artists was rarely entertained by the public, and there was

⁶ One of the examples Farrell gave was from the nineteenth century when women became active participants in the abolitionist and temperance networks.

a general acceptance of the notion of solitary genius. She noted that collaboration did appear to be more acceptable in other creative areas such as literature, and music.⁷

McCabe also discussed collaboration in the context of the master-apprentice relationship. Master artists sought to protect their originality, and consequently their patronage, by only identifying the work under their name. She reinforced the importance of individuality to artists by her assertion that they preferred to avoid working in groups because of ‘an overriding impulse toward stalwart individualism which generally precludes such formal collectivisation’ (p. 10). McCabe acknowledged that artistic collaboration was a more finely controlled process, whether initiated spontaneously or deliberately; yet she broadly defined artistic collaboration as two or more artists gathering together, pooling ideas and with equal participation creating an object.⁸ McCabe neglected the relational and subsequently emotional aspect which is an integral part of the collaborative process.

The *Art Journal* (1993) extended a special invitation to artists and writers, who had worked together on various projects to contribute to an article titled ‘Interactions between Artists and Writers.’ The article was intended to provide some insight into the practical and aesthetic issues posed by the collaborative process. Ten groups of artist/writers responded. The article provided illustrations of the final artwork, which were enhanced with text produced by each of the groups. Each person gave their own responses to the process, by describing what had occurred both physically and conceptually. The limitation of the article was that many of the collaborations were of a short duration, and only brief accounts of what occurred were articulated. However, the observations gave an insight into collaborations in which participants already had prior relationships, and how this can expedite the collaborative process.

An article by Drucker, ‘Collaboration without Object(s) in the Early Happenings’ (1993) asserted that happenings were, in fact, based on collaboration. ‘Happenings’

⁷ In literature Joseph Conrad and Ford Madox Ford and in music George and Ira Gershwin, and Gilbert and Sullivan are some examples.

⁸ Interestingly McCabe also states that ideas can be developed collaboratively, yet the results can also remain individual, perhaps alluding to the notion of ego.

existed for a short time from 1958 – 1961.⁹ These ‘Happenings’ were usually directed and performed by an artist, and combined elements of theatre and visual arts. A ‘Happening’ rejected traditional principles of craftsmanship and permanence in the arts. They were usually carefully planned, but also included some degree of spontaneity. Drucker contended that ‘Happenings’ were: ‘a refusal of product-oriented materialism, a rejection of the signature terms of mastery, originality, and authorship, and an overall subversion of the commodity- and object-oriented structure of visual art (p. 52).’ She described the characteristics of ‘Happenings’ as: simultaneity of actions; a mildly destructive impulse; a random quality to the relatedness of events; and collective activity. Drucker then stated that all of these elements, with the exception of the destructive impulse are collaborative features. By negating the product or commodity, Drucker focussed solely on the process however, she did not provide an insight into whether the artists themselves would agree with her contextualisation of their work in a social system which they were evidently rejecting.

The Third Hand (2001) by Australian artist and critic Charles Green critically examined collaborative artistic practice with a focus on the late 1960s and early 1970s. Green traced the origins of conceptual art in the 1960s which evolved into other styles such as Earth Art, Body Art, Installation Art and Performance Art. The image of the lone artist, which he argued was challenged during the 1960s, was examined through a number of case studies. Collaborative practices however were continually evolving and dependant on socio/political as well as historical circumstances for their existence; a fact which Green tended to overlook. *The Third Hand* informed this study by providing a theoretical basis for the act of collaboration, although with a focus on 1970s Conceptualism, and not 1980s and 1990s Postmodernism. The diverse case studies illustrated the depth and breadth of collaboration; however Green limited his study to couples or nuclear families, not larger groups. Green also appeared to regard identity as a third construction, without really examining why this occurred. Green acknowledged the importance of equality within collaboration. He also contended that Western art history has often accepted

⁹ The exception to these dates is Allan Kaprow who continued to use Happenings as a major component of his arts practice.

the male in a gendered partnership to be the predominant artist.¹⁰ Further examination of the effect of gender, which can be linked both to the recognition of an artist working collaboratively and also in the perception and subsequent status of their art making, would have been beneficial.

Chuck Close Prints: Process and Collaboration (2004), was a publication produced for the exhibition *Chuck Close Prints* organised by the Blaffer Gallery at the Art Museum of the University of Houston. The catalogue contained a section titled 'Process and Collaboration' of interviews with the artist Chuck Close and the printers who realised his designs. Although the word collaboration was used in the title, there were numerous instances where Close and the printers contradicted the idea that they were engaged in a collaborative process. Close referred to his corporate self, almost as a third identity and duly acknowledged the printmakers he worked with, yet contradicted the meaning of collaboration by claiming ownership of the work:

Like any corporation, I have the benefit of the brainpower of everyone who is working for me. It all ends up being my work, the corporate me, but everyone extends ideas and comes up with suggestions. It is a very different attitude than coming into an atelier, drawing on a plate, and giving it over to printers to edition. My prints have been truly collaborative, even though control is something that I give up reluctantly (Sultan, 2004, p. 10).

In addition to well developed communication processes, Close revealed that leadership within his collaborative process was an essential element. However, the extent of the collaboration, in terms of shared input from the conception of the design, was questionable. Karl Hecksher, one of the master printers in Close's studio revealed that:

Other printers would have done it in a different way, and it would have looked different. In my case, I am trying to capture what is going on in the

¹⁰ For example, from the late 1970s the artist Claes Oldenburg has collaborated with his wife Coosje van Bruggen, yet she is rarely acknowledged in mainstream art texts. This bias is also evident in texts about the artist Christo who has been exhibiting since the late 1950s. These texts however, have not conceded the instrumental role of his wife Jeanne-Claude, who he met in 1958, in their artistic practice.

image that Chuck has made, not just assigning a certain mark the right colour. It has to feel like Chuck, it has to feel like what he is intending to happen when he makes the painting. Even though it is not exactly like the painting, it has to speak to the power in the canvas. In a sense, there is not a lot of collaborating from my perspective, because I am not imposing or introducing elements into his imagery or affecting the result (Hecksher, 2004, p. 127).

The interviews with Close also revealed that he chose printmaking methods that the printers did not know anything about so they could work together with him to solve the technical problems that arose. Close stated that: ‘Everyone’s ideas add to the process’ (Lingen, Blanton, & Little, 2004, p. 92). Throughout the catalogue it was evident that authorship was of primary importance and although Close worked with master printmakers to produce the final print, he did not describe the process itself in great detail. The observations were more of a technical nature, rather than investigating the dynamics between people working with him. Roberts (2004) described this process of working as the artisanal model of teamwork, ‘in which the directed labour of others (artist-assistants and technicians) is subordinated to the signature style of the artist’ (pp. 557 - 558). In this arrangement the artist directs the labour of others with the understanding of all concerned that he or she retains sole authorship.¹¹

The concept of a corporate self who retains their identity and image was also investigated in *Organising Genius* by Bennis and Biederman (1997) who described Walt Disney’s work in feature animation as a collaborative effort. They stated that one of Disney’s self-serving idiosyncrasies was his insistence on receiving the glory for the studio’s collaborative triumphs, ‘while his cathedral builders remained anonymous (p. 35).’¹² This of course was not a new concept in the history of art. The workshop system which operated during the Renaissance, and which had superseded the guilds of the Middle Ages, was also based on a cooperative approach in which the

¹¹ The modern version of the artisanal model of teamwork was demonstrated in Andy Warhol’s Factory in the 1960s. This model has influenced contemporary artists such as Jeff Koons and Damien Hirst who successfully adopted Warhol’s ‘post-Duchampian deflation of handicraft in the studio’ (Roberts, 2004, p. 558).

¹² See the chapter titled ‘Troupe Disney’ in *Organising Genius* (1997), pp 31 – 62.

Master signed paintings produced by apprentices (Bennis & Biderman, 1997; Cole, 1983, 1995; Goldstein, 1996; Maginnis, 1995; Mancinelli, 1994; Renard, 1919). This approach to treating workers or apprentices who create work, but are not acknowledged for it, has been the model adopted by organisations whose brand name encapsulates the expertise of numerous people. As Sawyer (2006) noted, when we see a created product we assume that a single person created it:

But many created products are created by groups, organisations, and entire societies. In fact, in the modern era of mass production, the wristwatch is not created by any single individual, but by a complex organisation involving computer-aided design systems, microchips, factories in third-world countries, and international systems of distribution, manufacturing and trade (p. 30).

Bennis and Biderman (1997) argued that the myth of the triumphant individual has been deeply ingrained in our psyche, with contemporary views of leadership entwined with notions of heroism and subsequently ego.

The journal *Third Text* published a special issue on art and collaboration in 2004, which arose from papers presented at the ‘Diffusion: Collaborative Practice in Contemporary Art’ conference held at the Tate Modern in October, 2003. In the introduction Roberts and Wright (2004) linked collaboration with a range of values which they defined as: artistic value, the value of artistic labour, and the value-form of capitalism. Roberts and Wright stated: ‘collaboration in art expressly allows one to talk about value in art as a political matter, for collaboration is where labour embodied in the artwork (manual skill, cognition, art-specific competencies of all kinds) is exposed to scrutiny’ (p. 531). Importantly, in the context of this study the various authors examined the tension between art, individual authorship, autonomy and the social boundaries of where, how, with what and with whom, art might be made. Roberts and Wright noted that theoretical discussion on the question of collaboration has been largely neglected since the 1970s, and this was the first journal publication on the subject in English. The articles were thought provoking and provided an important critique of collaboration as a process which is inextricably linked with society.

Community & Public Art

Through their research on communities of practice Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder (2002) identified five stages in a community life cycle. Although communities may follow a different sequence, they have similar patterns of formation and transformation. The stages of the life cycle of a community are described in Table 7:

Stages	Description
Potential	People with similar issues and needs find each other and identify the potential for forming a community.
Coalescing	The community is formed as activities develop to meet the needs of the community members.
Maturing	Community members begin to plan directions, set standards, and engage in joint activities. The value of the community has been established. It begins to clarify its focus, role and boundaries.
Stewardship	The community begins to plateau. Although energy and activity continue, members who were once enthusiastic may take a sideline position. The main issue for the community is sustaining its momentum, recognising the natural changes in practice, membership, and relationship to the organisation.
Transformation	People leave the community when it is no longer useful or pertinent to them. New people join and the focus changes, returning the community to a new growth stage or moving it towards closure.

Table 7: Community Life Cycle (Wenger et al., 2002)

During the maturing stage of the community life cycle, Wenger identified an increased level of energy and visibility from the participants similar to the intensity identified in some of the other collaborative models in this chapter. Shared vision, clarification and strengthening of roles, and engaging in joint activities were also common across most of the collaborative models. Working collaboratively with the community entailed another level of complexity, as many participants are voluntary, and have joined a community group because of its social identity and/or the purpose of the project.

Community art brings together two seemingly paradoxical terms. This has been due to the traditional stereotypic view, held by the community, of the artist as someone separated from society. The origin of community art in Australia was due to what Binns (1991b) has described, as a crippling commodification of artists' work by the art market in the 1960s and 1970s (p. 12). At this time 'abstraction' predominated; this resulted in many artists feeling estranged from the art world:

Artists disenchanted with the art world, and now concerned with political and social issues, moved out to find new languages, other audiences; dialogue and collaboration across contextual boundaries. Others outside the professional arts were being caught up in a crafts revival and the establishment or revitalisation of local arts and community centres (Binns, 1991b, p. 12).

Binns revealed that at the beginning of the community art movement in Australia it appeared as though the traditional hierarchies and boundaries of the art world, particularly those concerning the myth of genius, had been set aside. Amateurs and professionals worked together, ignoring distinctions between areas such as art and craft. Political support was also evident in the implementation of the Australia Council's Community Arts and Development Committee in 1973. However, it appeared that this period of transformation was relatively short-lived:

The spotlight of attention lit up the new approaches and concerns, and for a time it seemed as if the borders between the high arts and other forms of art production would open to allow prolonged exchange and discourse. There was interchange, a slipping back and forth and certainly new alliances were made. But, essentially, I think it amounted to a reshuffling, and after that brief period of rejuvenation through contact if not communion, the centres contracted back and the borders were reinforced if not closed (Binns, 1991b, p. 12).

Binns related how the 1980s was a period which celebrated the individual ego, the art market, the merging of art colleges into universities and the development of a theoretical language for visual art, all of which succeeded in distancing art further from the community. However, an awareness of these ideas and values was necessary, according to Binns, in order 'to know what motivates and shapes us' (p. 13). Binns was referring to the social system which had been affected by the individual, the domain and the field. It is difficult to effect any change in the domain of art without acknowledging how these elements affected the artists and those who determine what is acceptable, such as galleries and curators. Adams (1991) proposed that community art had always privileged process over product. The success of a community art

project had traditionally been gauged by the extent of participation from members of the community. However, the visual arts outcomes of community art, such as banners, tapestries, and posters, had often not been assessed by aesthetic criteria. Adams (1991) stated that if community art work was exhibited in a contemporary gallery space in which critiques and reviews are part of normal procedure, 'then it must be subject to the same conditions that apply to other exhibits or events' (p. 102).

The process for making community art involved collaboratively engaging with the community to create a product which reflects its identity. Adams (1991) stated: 'Community arts rejects the fetishisation of the artist and the emphasis on individual authorship' (p. 71). The collaborative nature of community art was therefore seen to be an integral element of its identity. Many contemporary artists avoid or fail to acknowledge collaborative ventures in their art, as they believe it diminished their credibility. Vivienne Binns, an Australian artist, vividly recalled the paradox of working as an artist in the community, particularly in terms of her artistic identity:

The shift from a practice as an individual artist to one in collaboration with others in particular communities, flung me face to face with a mass of contradictions and tensions which greatly tested the rationalisations of what I was doing. Despite my desire to play down the role of the artist with unique superior skills and perceptions, I found the need to display my credentials as a 'real' artist in order to maintain credibility with those with whom I worked. I was discomforted if taken for granted or not recognised as an artist (a learning at first-hand about the artist's ego) (1991a, pp. 156 - 157).

Shiner (2001) revealed that the funding of community-based projects makes them a form of public art. However the distinction was that although public art was also commissioned, it was usually by government bodies, and was created by artists who may employ technicians to provide expertise in fulfilling their proposal. Many of the state and territory governments in Australia legislated that a percentage of public constructions costs must incorporate the creation of artwork. A number of these works, however, turn away from 'the modern ideals of the autonomous artist and the self referential work to embrace a democratic vision of collaboration, service and

social function' (Shiner, 2001, p. 301). The government ostensibly employs artists based on their ability to fulfil their aesthetic criteria and complete the work on time and budget.

Gude (1989) revealed that in the field of public art, some artists wish to identify themselves as 'community artists.' She described this as reflecting a series of choices about how the artist conceives of public space, the nature of the artist, and their view of creativity and originality. In this context, Gude argued that community art requires an aesthetics of collaboration; one which rejects an aesthetics based on the myth of the individual genius:

One of the most prominent characteristics of an aesthetics of collaboration is the weaving of diverse images into a unified whole. The goal is not the subordination of the individual, but the harmonising of alternative visions. The source of authenticity of collaborative work does not come about by paring down to a single essential image; it is created through the accrual of important detail, through the accumulation of varied points of view. Thus communally designed work extends the promise of the modernist convention of multiple points of view, from representing the fracturing of individual consciousness to the reuniting and reweaving of social, collective consciousness (1989, p. 323).

Hawkins (1990) noted that community art participation has been regarded as a lesser experience in the art world: 'a form of therapy or remedial activity for those who are considered unable to reach the status of audience' (p. 65). This statement, however, does not take into account the skills and creativity that many community art participants already possess. It also diminished the responsibility many artists feel to contribute to their community. They understand that in many cases this will entail assisting participants to broaden their understanding of art and working together to create work which does not devalue, but enhances the community's identity.

Numerous community art projects rely on the services of voluntary workers, who may or may not be arts trained. Gude (1989) described the traditional method of community collaboration was for the artist to interview the community members

about what they wanted, and then the artist would create a design for the community to follow:

The assumption seems to be that community members, whilst able to articulate the issues of their lives, are unable to exercise creative artist powers to image these conditions dramatically. This division between artists and 'regular people' is a fundamental legacy of the modern European art tradition (p. 322).

Onyx and Leonard (2000) revealed that volunteering was a contribution to the civic life of the community, which rejuvenates social capital. They noted that volunteering required high levels of trust for it to be successful. Trust also appeared as a common factor in the collaborations discussed in this text. Onyx and Leonard noted any attempt by organisations to coerce volunteers leads to a loss of trust and a decline in willingness to volunteer. The authors also stated that women volunteer more than men - 21% as opposed to 17% - and the pattern of volunteering is highly gendered (p. 119). Baldock (1998) argued that the availability of women for volunteering signified the traditional division of labour between men who were paid, and women who were not.¹³ Even within the same community organisation, it appeared that men seem to adopt the management committee (external relations) role, whilst women gravitate towards the networking role (internal relations):

The divide between the work of bonding and bridging social capital parallels that between 'the public domain' and 'the private domain'. The public sphere, including paid work, government and civic responsibilities, is dominated by men and highly valued. The private sphere within the home and the local community includes most unpaid work and is seen to have little value. Women's delegation to the private sphere has profoundly restricted women's lives. Within the private sphere, there is little opportunity to develop bridges across divides or to access the resources of other communities and groups (Onyx & Leonard, 2000, p. 120).

¹³ Onyx and Leonard (2000) also reveal that many women have resolved the problem of competing demands by giving unpaid caring work to paid carers. 'However, with increasing demand for subsidised childcare and aged care, governments are cutting costs, reducing subsidies and putting more and more pressure on women to take back their 'traditional' work' (p. 120).

Because the majority of volunteers are women, and many community art projects rely on volunteers, it could be argued that these factors also contributed to the devaluing of community art by the art world.

In contrast, the environmental artists Christo and Jeanne-Claude, who often rely on the community to realise their work, described the collaborative process *as* the artwork (Green, 1999). Their works exist temporarily, are documented and then dismantled. Green contended that the integral nature of collaboration in Christo and Jean-Claude's work was a response to changes in the art world:

Collaborative authorship for Christo and Jeanne-Claude was more than personal idiosyncrasy – it was one solution to a disbelief in traditional ideas of what art might be as there has been a loss of confidence in the properties of aesthetic experience, and even in the visual, as a means of gaining knowledge (p. 14).

It was only at the beginning of the 1980s that Christo and Jeanne Claude insisted on retrospective joint reattribution of all works from the late 1960s onwards. Until this time they had been ascribed to Christo, even though both artists were involved in the design (Christo) and marketing (Jeanne-Claude). Green proposed that:

Christo and Jeanne-Claude altered their attitudes and opinions about the public acknowledgment of their collaboration without wishing this shift to be solidly pinned down. As signs of intense individuality the work was recognised in critical commentary and newspaper cartoons and gained a level of trademark recognition achieved by very few other artists. But the work was the product of two artists (p. 13).

This shift from individual to joint authorship paralleled the acceptance in the art world of collaborative practices, particularly from the 1980s onwards. However, the notion of the individual genius, in addition to their talent, initially allowed Christo to be acknowledged by the field and accepted in the domain. After he had achieved this, he then sought recognition for his partner. Although voluntary community workers were

instrumental in creating Christo and Jeanne-Claude's large-scale environmental works, there was a tacit acceptance in the art world that they are not credited in subsequent documentation.¹⁴

Social and Cultural Influences on Collaborative Practice

For many people the gallery system has been their most common experience of encountering art. In the article 'Artistic Autonomy and the Communication Society,' (2004) Holmes argued that aesthetic institutions, and consequently artists, have been affected by the transformation of society on a model which measured input and output in the context of economic viability. This has resulted in privatisation of companies, the reduction of staff and consequently a reliance on automated programs to complete banking, pay bills, and book tickets for flight and entertainment. Issues arise however, when the same automated programs were used when assistance was sought and long waiting queues ensure. Many artists, who have traditionally eschewed society, have nevertheless exhibited within a gallery context. They are aware that when entering into such a relationship they are dealing with a business. Galleries, curators, dealers and artists have become more aware of the importance of publicity, professionally presented work and the cultivation of some degree of controversy to enhance their marketability.¹⁵

... the values of transnational state capitalism have permeated the art world, not only through the commodity form, but also and even primarily through the artists' adoption of managerial techniques and branded subjectivities (Homes, 2004, p. 551).

This was an important revelation and became more evident, particularly, as I looked to other sectors for their description of collaboration and the types of models they were using to facilitate the process effectively. An investigation of various business models revealed that management structures were also undergoing a process of transformation from a less hierarchical model, associated with masculine attributes, to

¹⁴ The volunteers' untiring efforts however have been captured on film recorded at the time, such as *Running Fence* (1978) which was filmed in the U.S. and directed by Albert Maysles.

¹⁵ The recent 'curator gate' scandal at the National Gallery of Victoria involving Geoffrey Smith who recently resigned following allegations that he was involved in conflict-of-interest purchases is one case. His partner was quoted as saying: 'The phone's been running hot, he's a world expert on a large number of artists – he's hot property (Perkin, 2006b).'

a more devolved and horizontal system of management, associated with feminine attributes (Barrentine, 1993b; Buzzanell, 2000; Clift et al., 1995; Henry, 1996; Montuori & Purser, 1999b; Purser & Montuori, 1999; Rickards & De Cock, 1999; Rost, 1991; Thousand et al., 1994; Webb, 2005; Wenger et al., 2002). This information created another perspective to the research, namely the role of gender in the collaborative process, and in particular feminine attributes and their association, with transformations occurring in various sectors through less hierarchical methods.

Barrentine the editor of *When The Canary Stops Singing* (1993b) described this new way of doing business as a feminine approach. She defined the word feminine through Carl Jung's interpretation as characterising love, nurturance and compassion which are not solely the provenance of women (p. 10). Jung also argued that a person was born with a feminine and masculine side, with one typically dominating the other. Jung proposed that when individuals were able to recognise both sides and integrate them into a balanced whole they have achieved a healthy personality. Gergen (2005) also agreed noting that effective leaders must mix together masculine as well as feminine qualities. Eisler (2005) stated that leadership and management styles which emphasised caring rather than coercion have become more prevalent today. She believed this was 'because of the rising status of women, and thus of qualities and behaviours associated with femininity, such as nurturance and empathy' (p. 25). There are a number of reasons for this, but generally it, can be argued, that as the Western world has moved from an industrial to an information economy, people are expected to think for themselves, and will often resist and resent attempts by leaders who employ a policy which alienates and coerces employees.

The Situation: Collaborations, Collectives and Artist Networks from Sydney, Singapore, Berlin (MCA, 2005) exhibition catalogue provided a visual documentation of the complex nature of collaboration, *Situation* was structured around three artist networks and collectives based in Sydney, Singapore and Berlin. The exhibition aimed to:

... acknowledge the important contributions that artists make to the cultural life of any city, through their development of a range of platforms for making, viewing and thinking about art, such as artist-run spaces,

publications and other artist-generated activities. By translating these connections and contexts into the MCA, the relationship of artists to institutions is also brought to the fore, with many artists utilising the museum in ways to call attention to its function and processes (p. 8).

The influence of institutions on artistic practice and the uneasy tension between rejecting and accepting the social context in which they exist was one which artists have been challenging since their own role as 'artist' evolved in the eighteenth century. The premise of *Situation: Collaborations, Collectives and Artist Networks from Sydney, Singapore, Berlin* also emphasised the important connection between society and the collaborative process, which was in direct opposition to the solitary artist who has been perceived to reject society: 'Running through many of the artists' works and projects is a questioning of the social role of the artist, and a search for ways to bring art into the wider world' (MCA, 2005, p. 14). However, by collecting these various artist-run initiatives under the MCA banner, the institution itself subverted the autonomous process the artists have engaged in to question society and its structures. This was revealed particularly in the Situation Online Forum which was an abridged online discussion held in the lead-up to *Situation*, convened by Elizabeth Pulie. In the email discussions a number of the exhibiting artists questioned the context of exhibiting in or being associated with the MCA, and how this challenged their artistic autonomy and connection with the society they lived in:

I think that the museum needs us more than we (in our situation of negotiating or collaborating) need the museum. I find the situation in a museum difficult because it is necessarily representing. How do we represent something which is the opposite of an institutional situation, which is made to function outside the institution? Which is aiming at something purely non-institutional, and therefore might dissolve by placing and framing itself/being seen within the institutional frame? (Lisa Nellemann, Wed 9 Feb, 2005, 2.27am).

The on-line forum, in addition to the artist's statements and the curator's essay provided an insight to the collaborative process through artist-run initiatives (ARI's) which traditionally have sought to disrupt the socially constructed institution of the art

gallery or museum. Russell Storer, the curator, noted that contemporary artists who consider such questions are participating in a long history of institutional critique and self-organisation.¹⁶ The uneasy relationship between the artist and society has been influenced by the evolving status of the artist from the artisan, which will be briefly overviewed in the context of social and cultural issues relating to gender.

The Changing Role of the Artist

The changing role of the artist was an important theme in this study, and will be further investigated in the case studies. It is important to briefly outline the origin of the word ‘artist’ and how the role has changed through the social context it existed in. The provenance of the *artist* as opposed to the *artisan* has been well documented with its origins often being traced to the period of the High Renaissance (1495 – 1527) in Rome (Cole, 1983; De La Croix, Tansey, & Kirkpatrick, 1991; De Vecchi, 1994; Donnelly, 2003; Vasari, 1986a, 1986b; Weil, 1995). Shiner (2001) argued the transition from artisan to artist was ‘a long and gradual journey from the old art/craft system toward our modern fine art system’ (p. 35). In some ways, he has argued, the Middle Ages may have been more closely associated with our perception of the autonomous artist.¹⁷ Shiner’s argument appeared to be supported by research which questions to what extent artists such as Michelangelo (1475 – 1564) demonstrated autonomy and pursued self-expression and originality without reference to anyone else.¹⁸ Shiner (2001) challenged the origin of the term artist in the Renaissance by stating:

... to speak of Renaissance artisan/artists in general as “autonomous,”
“sovereign,” or “absolute” is certainly an exaggeration. The Renaissance

¹⁶ Gustave Courbet set up a booth of his own paintings outside the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1855. The French Impressionists held their first exhibition in the Paris studios of the photographer Nada. The *9 x 5 Impression Exhibition*, held in 1889 in Melbourne, went against the prevailing convention in Australia for academically ‘finished’ works. Gustave Klimt and other artists formed the Wiener Secession out of dissatisfaction with the conservatism of the dominant art societies, and the desire to bring together ‘art and life’. Avante-garde movements from Dada to Constructivism and Minimalism to Pop all contained anti-institutional impulses by definition. Institutional critique and an emphasis on art and life has been closely aligned with conceptualism. In some cases this has meant the artist has taken on the curatorial role themselves in order to control the presentation of their work.

¹⁷ Shiner noted that there were significant improvements in the status and image of musicians, painters and writers, but the Renaissance lacked the ideal of the autonomous artist pursuing self-expression and originality.

¹⁸ See the chapter titled ‘The Problem with Michelangelo’s Assistants’ in *The Sistine Chapel: A Glorious Restoration*, pp 46 – 79.

norm was cooperative production from workshops that fulfilled specific contracts for decorating churches, civic buildings, banners, wedding chests, and furniture. Even painters and sculptors who did not have permanent workshops often accepted joint commissions (Mantegna) or agreed to complete a half-finished sculpture (Michelangelo) with no sense that this was an offence to their “creative individuality.” The workshop, with associates and apprentices doing backgrounds, feet, torsos, and often whole panels, continued to be typical from Raphael down through Rubens in the seventeenth century, and painters generally continued to work on decorative commissions alongside carvers, glassmakers, ceramists, and weavers (pp 42 - 43).

Although the artist did allow skilled assistants to help complete commissions, it appears that the majority of this work was not engaged in collaboratively, but more cooperatively. The assistants were not involved in joint decision making with the artist, and they did not equally share in the input and outcomes, particularly financial, of the work. They were given directions by the artist whom they were expected to follow, even sublimating their own way of working to create the style the artist was known for. There were numerous ‘hands’ involved in producing a work from this period, and documents from the time have revealed that patrons could withhold payment if they believed their commission was not created by the Master’s hands.¹⁹

The artist as described by De La Croix et al. (1991) in *Art Through the Ages* was ‘a new profession, having its own rights of expression, its own venerable characters, and its own claims to recognition by the great’ (p. 634). The use of the word *artist* before the time of the Renaissance was an anachronism, because it was seldom used to describe a person who actually made *art*. Artisans were identified by their craft, such as painting, sculpting, or illuminating. The first consistent attempt to document the lives of Italian artists was Giorgio Vasari’s *Vite de’ ... Pittori Scultori, ed Architettori* ... translated as *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects* written

¹⁹ Titian (c. 1490 – 1576) encountered this situation upon his delivery of three octagonal canvases in 1568 for the ceiling of the Palazzo Comunale in the city of Brescia. The instructions for each of the canvases were extremely detailed and provided little scope for Titian’s own interpretation; however he completed them in June of that year and they were shipped to Brescia. Even though the instructions had been followed meticulously, and the works were well executed, Titian’s authorship was questioned.

in 1550, and later revised and expanded by Vasari in 1568. Vasari was an important Florentine painter and architect of the sixteenth century, and has been recognised as the first historian of Western art. His extensive biographies are a primary source of information about Italian Renaissance artists from the thirteenth century to Vasari's day. Shiner (2001) noted that during this time none of the European languages made a systematic conceptual distinction between 'artist' and 'craftsman' in the modern sense, and stated:

Yet there are aspects of even Vasari's book that undercut the popular images of the "Renaissance Artist." Vasari, for example, did not – and could not – write a book called *Lives of the Artists* as some translations have it, but *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects*. It is a small but crucial difference. During the Renaissance there was no regulative concept of "the artist" that separated painters, sculptors and architects collectively from glassblowers, ceramists and embroiderers (p. 40).

Important steps were made towards the modern status/perception of the artist during this time, such as the introduction of the biography of the artist,²⁰ the development of the self-portrait,²¹ and the position of court artist.²²

The term artisan was prominent in the Middle Ages when peasants were liberated from feudal lords and communes developed (Gadd & Wallis, 2002; Hobson, 1920; Leeson, 1979; Renard, 1919; Staley, 1906; Unwin, 1963). In this pre-industrial society it was often believed that men dominated the world of work, as depicted in illustrations from the time. However, women were active participants in the economic life of the medieval city; although their participation depended on age, marital status, and the country in which they lived (Backhouse, Maddern, & Tomas, 1989; Gadd & Wallis, 2002; Hobson, 1920; Leeson, 1979; Lucas, 1983; McRee & Dent, 1999; Mitchell, 1999; Morewedge, 1975; Renard, 1919; Staley, 1906; Unwin, 1963).

²⁰ The artist/artisan Ghiberti and Cellini had written their autobiographies during this time.

²¹ Until this time many artists had placed themselves as one of the figures in the painting with their gaze directed away from the viewer. During the Renaissance some artists began to paint their own likenesses and engaged the viewer directly.

²² In this position the artist could be paid an honorarium for work executed instead of having to ask for payment which would have placed him or her at a lower status.

Guilds were formed when a number of local people of the same occupation or trade lived in a town or city centre; the numbers could be from a handful to hundreds (Leeson, 1979). The early craft fraternities or guilds had both men and women, although restrictions on women in the crafts increased as the fourteenth century labour shortage grew (Lucas, 1983; McRee & Dent, 1999; Mitchell, 1999; Renard, 1919).

During the later Middle Ages ‘the change from a command to a consumer economy meant that artists were no longer necessarily associated with the prestige of major patrons’ (Heslop, 1997, p. 58). However, considerable allowances still had to be made for the wishes of sponsors and commissioners of practically any work, although it appears that this still may have allowed some masters ‘artistic licence.’²³ A Master was in charge of individual workshops, was most often male and an experienced independent artist who obtained commissions and oversaw the activities occurring within the workshop. Under his charge were the apprentices who appeared to have entered this profession through family connections, as many of the artists were related by either blood or marriage (Cole, 1983, p. 15). The apprentices lived in the master’s house and his wife fed and disciplined them, often severely. The master’s wife was also responsible for the sale of her husband’s products, and this duty was fixed by the statutes of the guilds (Sachs, 1971, p. 42). The workshop was predominantly a cooperative, producing a range of well-crafted objects. Apprentices were charged with numerous tasks; however the extent of their collaboration with the Master raises important issues regarding authorship. In *The Renaissance Artist At Work* Cole (1983) described the tasks of the apprentice as follows:

It was the apprentice’s task to assist the artist in the preparation of materials and, once the design had been formulated, to help him execute the work. On occasions when the master was absent, the apprentices executed the whole work. More often they did the less important and quite tedious decorative parts of frescoes or statues. Their relation with the master was truly collaborative; pure artistic individuality in the twentieth-century sense did not exist (pp. 15-16).

²³ Pickering (1970) stated that the medieval masters were probably not passive in their relationship with their patrons: ‘One cannot help thinking that the visionary nature of some of the medieval masters must have sorely tested the integrity of sponsors of their work’ (p. 58).

According to Cole the role of the apprentice in some workshops appeared to be quite broad, depending on their expertise and experience, as in some cases they even helped to conceive of the design and were responsible for its implementation. Campbell (1995) also stated: 'Drawings by assistants are routinely dismissed as mere copies of lost examples by the master, and little consideration is given to the possibility that skilled assistants may have participated in the search for design solutions' (p. 204). Whilst it may be difficult to know the extent of the assistants' participation in the actual design and execution stage; however, in the context of this study, it was noteworthy that none of the assistants were attributed on a work, even if they had wholly designed and completed it. This attribution could necessarily affect the reputation of the master by inferring that his skills required further assistance to such an extent that he was required to acknowledge it.

These types of working arrangements were necessary to maximise productivity, and according to Maginnis (1995), appeared in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century as 'associations and collaborations that were to characterise much of Renaissance production' (p. 25). However it would be inaccurate however to state that the apprentices of Renaissance artists were treated as intellectual equals, they were ostensibly employed to learn the craft of their profession. As Greer (1979) noted:

When the master accepted commissions he was usually required to guarantee that he would handle the design and the important details of the composition himself. Whether he acknowledged and promoted his apprentice was largely a matter of his temperament. The work which emerged from the bottega [studio] was mostly uninscribed: when a name appeared upon it, it was always the master's. No dishonesty was meant thereby; Giotto used to 'sign' works which had been mainly carried out by his assistants. The name was evidence of his creative control, a guarantee of quality (p. 171).

The guilds had a range of powers and responsibilities such as establishing quality standards, determining prices, and overseeing apprenticeships (Leeson, 1979; Lucas,

1983; McRee & Dent, 1999; Mitchell, 1999; Renard, 1919; Staley, 1906). Their most overarching power however was determining who was allowed to practice the craft in their city or town. Not surprisingly, it was therefore crucial, particularly for women, to obtain membership to the guild, and the most common route was to become an apprentice. As McRee and Dent (1999) note, both boys and girls were accepted as apprentices at the craft guilds, although boys predominated (p. 243).²⁴ Leeson (1979) described having an apprentice as being particularly beneficial for the master, as he could control his livelihood and the quality of the work produced by usually choosing his son, or more rarely his daughter to pass on the trade secrets. There were occasions when women had their own guilds, such as in Paris which had five all female guilds that specialised in silk production (Mitchell, 1999). This was the exception however, as in most guilds women only comprised a small percentage of the members or were not evident at all.²⁵ At the height of the Middle Ages European cities experienced dramatic growth and employment opportunities were plentiful. The involvement of women in the economy enhanced production, and therefore there was no reason to exclude them. This prosperity, in addition to the plague which killed approximately one third of the European population, allowed women to remain in the workforce during this time:

Labour was in short supply after the plague, and survivors found their services in heavy demand. For women, the century-long shortage of workers meant increased opportunity for employment of all kinds. The help they provided in the shops of their fathers and husbands was more welcome than ever, and opportunities for independent endeavours grew. Indeed, economic conditions were so favourable that many more women than usual may have been able to live independently, delaying marriage or forgoing it altogether (Mitchell, 1999, p. 252).

²⁴ An apprenticeship usually began at the age of thirteen or fourteen and lasted from between five to ten years. During that time the apprentice was fed by the Master, lived in their house, followed their orders and learned the trade. When the apprenticeship ended they were eligible to become fully fledged members of the guild.

²⁵ Mackenney (1987) notes that in Venice women were in the textile and clothing trades, in addition to petty retail such as ironmongery and haberdashery; although in the years around 1300 their role is not clearly defined.

The task of building an enduring social and political organisation for the middle classes had begun in the fourteenth century and had become more regimented in the fifteenth century (Unwin, 1963). By the middle of the fifteenth century employment opportunities began to narrow due to a combination of factors including population growth, different entry requirements into some trades, and changing attitudes towards women.²⁶ Over a period of time, and culminating in a 'vocation' in the Victorian era, the ideal woman became one defined by the parameters of domesticity.²⁷ Chadwick (1996) described how this image was intimately connected and controlled, particularly through women's craft work: 'It was marriage and domesticity which contained women's animal instincts according to both popular and medical sources; it was under the sign of the distaff and spindle that female virtue and domesticity were joined' (p. 124). Isaacs (1992) also observed that there was a rigid separation of roles between men and women in nineteenth century society, and it is only relatively recently that this division has become lessened (p. 8).²⁸

Art Making and Gender

Prior to the Industrial Revolution the family formed the dominant unit of production, and the distinction between the productive labour of men and women was less rigidly marked (Callen, 1984 - 85). However as industrialisation increased, home production became less viable and a separation between the home and work place became more distinct. The historical origin of the sexual division of labour was based on women's biological role in reproducing the work force, and has been seen as one of the key factors in the oppression and exploitation of women (Callen, 1984 - 85; Chadwick, 1996; Greer, 1979; Kline, 1993; Lorber, 1994; Miller, 1986; Opfell, 1991). During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the Victorian ideal of domesticity culminated in women being portrayed as the spiritual guardian of the home, and the

²⁶ During the mid-fifteenth century Europe began its recovery from the plague in terms of population growth which resulted in increased competition for jobs. This affected both men and women; however the impact for women was more severe. For example, the government of Bristol passed an ordinance in 1461 limiting women's work in weavers' shops by explaining that it was so the 'king's people' would have employment. In some places the market became so tight that the only way an apprentice who had become a journeyman could become a master was to marry the widow of one. Changing technology also effectively limited women's involvement in the guilds due to the difficulty of raising capital to buy equipment.

²⁷ Virginia Woolfe talked of killing the Angel in the House, which was a term for the part of the feminine self that presumably keeps a woman docile (Modjeska, 1999, p. 75).

²⁸ Isaacs refers to the woman's role as primarily to nurture children, provide food, and care for the home.

home as a non-competitive, sacred and private place of retreat: ‘Contamination by the male commercial world was to be avoided at all costs if women were to maintain their role as creators of safe havens from that world, and if men were able to retain their dominance and authority within it’ (Callen, 1984 - 85, p. 2).

The societal expectation of women, which was related specifically to their gender, also succeeded in connecting craft - labelled as ‘domestic and decorative art’ – to women’s preferred method of expression. Bermingham (1992) stated that ‘the denigration of craft in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries by both industrial capitalism and the Academy facilitated its feminisation, and this feminisation of craft ensured its marginalisation as ‘women’s art’’ (p. 162). As discussed previously, population growth, lack of employment opportunities, and changing attitudes to women were all social factors which have contributed to craft being perceived as a gendered discipline. The feminisation of craft demonstrated the deep gender prejudices that underpinned the division between art and craft and consequently the artist and artisan. The societal expectation that women should not be removed from their essential role in the home and seek employment, thereby disrupting the patriarchal status quo was deeply entrenched during this time. Therefore certain aspects of artistic production were labelled as domestic, which were usually craft items produced in and for the home. The basis of the modern concept of the division and naming of the fine arts and crafts²⁹ can be traced to this time, which had evolved from centuries of slippage between gender and societal expectations.³⁰ Callen (1984 – 85) traced the origin of this perception back to the Renaissance:

This hierarchical split can be traced back to Renaissance times, when artists began to shun the practical and manual aspects of their craft in order to gain the social status accorded intellectuals. However, significantly, it was with the Industrial Revolution, the rise of the bourgeois family and its accompanying concept of domesticity, that the schism reached completion (p. 3).

²⁹ At this time crafts were often referred to as the ‘lesser arts’.

³⁰ An infamous example of this also occurred during WWII when many women took on roles previously done by men to help the war effort and then had to relinquish them upon their return.

Cennini's essay *Il libro dell'arte* (1400) written during the Renaissance, declared the artist's intention to break from the 'tradition' of the period. This statement signalled a move away from the communal nature of creating objects in a workshop situation, or for a specific commission to a more individualistic and autonomous approach which would later define the modern artist. Berman (1999) noted that *Il Libro dell'Arte* was usually regarded as a turning point, 'marking the end of the craft tradition and the call for modern artistic creativity' (p. 88). This was a long and gradual process. The modern definition of the artist became fully fledged through the art movement Romanticism (c.1780 – 1900) in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century during the Victorian era. Shroder (1961) detailed how the romantic image of the artist, particularly in France, meant more than just technical skill and expertise. The term *artist* also acquired an emotional value during this time becoming a way of life, almost a quasi-religious concept:

... So if you point out a man, in a palace or in a garret, and you use the word *artist*, I salute that man, I envy him in either place; he is a fortunate man in this world, he is a dreamer, he is a carefree philosopher, little concerned with the material facts of life, and who does not realise their extent or their danger (Janin, 1831).

This expectation of social displacement consolidated the dilemma facing the artist in the nineteenth century. The artist had to be seen to distance themselves from society to be considered seriously. However, many artists had to rely on the support of families to survive. In the eighteenth century and in the centuries preceding it, the artist had depended on society for patronage in terms of recognition and financial rewards.³¹ Shepard (2005) described how this view of the artist and their rejection of society neglected the supportive social network which many artists required to continue working:

The Romantic artist, in contrast to the medieval and Renaissance guilds of artists who worked under the direction of a master painter, was a solitary genius who struggled heroically against the odds, often misunderstood in

³¹ This patronage could invariably provide censorship in terms of subject matter and its portrayal than actually encouraging creative originality.

his lifetime, often destitute, to express his singular vision. It's a notion of the artist that has survived tenaciously into the present, despite both the postmodern challenge to the idea of the artist as conscious agent of his own creativity and the work of feminist art historians that has brought women into the frame. As a concept, though, it denies the actual conditions of an artist's existence. Life is very rarely lived in a vacuum. People very rarely achieve extraordinary feats of artistic production without the sustenance of at least one significant other who believes in and supports the artist in his or her quest (p. 2).

There are a number of intimate partnerships which have sustained artists throughout the history of art. Whilst we are aware of those internationally recognised ones such as the couples Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner, Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, Sonia and Robert Delaunay, and Sophie Taeuber and Hans Arp, there are many more that remain unacknowledged. Nochlin (2003) also challenged the proposition that social structures such as families and other institutions do not have some influence on the lives of artists:

... the total situation of art making, both in terms of the development of the art maker and in the nature and quality of the work of art itself, occur in a social situation, are integral elements of this social structure, and are mediated and determined by specific and definable social institutions, be they art academies, systems of patronage, mythologies of the divine creator, artist as he-man or social outcast (p. 232).

This link between society and artists was particularly evident in the Arts and Crafts Movement which had its origins in mid-nineteenth century Britain.³² The movement sought to provide an alternative to the perceived harshness of nineteenth century industrialisation by fostering spiritual harmony through work processes; and to change that process, and therefore subsequently, its products, through the encouragement of hand made objects as opposed to machine made goods (Callen, 1979; Cumming & Kaplan, 1991; Lucie-Smith, 1981; Parry, 1988). Importantly, in

³² The Arts and Crafts Movement evolved from the strict design morality of the Gothic Revival in early Victorian Britain.

the context of this study, the Arts and Crafts Movement assigned equal value to all creative endeavours and was concerned with how objects were created and how they could possess meaning as well as utility. The Arts and Crafts Movement elevated the status of craft, which had sunk as the image and status of the artist achieved new heights in the nineteenth century (Cumming & Kaplan, 1991; Dormer, 1997; Lucie-Smith, 1981; Markowitz, 1994; Rowley, 1989; Shiner, 2001).

In the late nineteenth century however, artists were fighting their own battle to create 'art for art's sake'. This philosophy emphasised the aesthetic of the work rather than a description of the actual subject. In response to this art critics took an aesthetic stance arguing that: 'if there was no knowledge of the literal subject the painting might look like an unintelligible chaos of random paint flecks and dark washes, an incompetent insult to the traditions of craftsmanship and the demands of verisimilitude' (Rosenblum & Janson, 1984, p. 363). Towards the end of the nineteenth century both art and craft were being re-examined and redirected towards an aesthetic which sought meaning beyond traditional expectations of prior function.

Although the Industrial Revolution gradually eroded the workshop processes of craftspeople (which were uncannily similar to those of the workshops in the Middle Ages),³³ there was soon a demand for skilled workers who understood design and how to transfer it for use in mechanical processes. These workers were not traditional craftspeople who had been employed in the workshop system, or autonomous artists, but a hybrid of both. However, as Shiner (2001) noted, even though they were a relatively skilled elite among the majority of factory workers they were still given assignments and their work pace was dictated by their employer (p. 209). Their work was described as 'applied art'³⁴ and its distinction from fine art was evident in the creation of separate institutions for applied/decorative arts and the academies and

³³ Shiner described traditional workshops as having four characteristics. First, they were intimate hierarchies based on the inventiveness, knowledge, and skill that formed the 'art' or 'mystery' of the craft. Second, although there was a division of labour in the larger shops, apprentices learned all aspects of production. Third, although the pace of work varied according to demand, the pace was such that there was time for frequent breaks and conversations. Finally, much of the work was still done with hand tools and by techniques that had been handed down from generation to generation.

³⁴ Lucie-Smith (1986) defined 'craft' as a form of making in which the artisan is involved in the whole process of design and in the use of hand skills, and the decorative arts as a process in which the craftsman may produce unique objects, but works under the strict control of an outside designer, even if no industrial processes are involved.

museums for fine art (Bell, 1984; De La Croix et al., 1991; Goldstein, 1996; Markowitz, 1994).

Women have traditionally been indoctrinated with social messages which encourage them to be passive, deferential and to feel guilt for being unable to fulfil the impossible demands of their ascribed social role (Miller, 1986; Raymond, 1986). The cultural message that women have received, has been that they are responsible for personal, emotional and social processes and outcomes, especially failures (Weeks, 1994). This culturally imposed perception has resulted in women being disadvantaged by their gender, even when they have proven they are more than competent to complete the task at hand.³⁵ In her book *Paradoxes of Gender* (1994), Lorber stated that gender is a human invention has which organised human social life in culturally patterned ways. Lorber also argued that the perception of gender has changed in the past and will in the future, but ‘without deliberate restructuring it will not necessarily change in the direction of greater equality between women and men’ (p. 6). Chadwick (1996) revealed how gender has affected the perception of women artists in society:

... the autonomy of the art object has closely identified with this view of the artist as a solitary genius, his creativity mapped and given value in monographs and catalogues. Since the nineteenth century, art history has also been closely aligned with the establishing of authorship, which forms the basis of the economic valuing of Western art. Our language and expectations about art have tended to rank that produced by women as below that produced by men in ‘quality,’ resulting in lesser monetary value (p. 17).

Janet Wolff (1992) has argued that in order to examine the assumption that women are excluded from culture, we need to understand what is meant by claiming that

³⁵ In 1961 thirteen women were judged to be NASA’s top astronauts, even better than the Mercury 7 crew who were later immortalised in print and film. Dr Don Kilgore, the only surviving member of the testing team recalled: ‘In truth, they generally outdid the men. It is my judgement that they would have at least been the equal of the men and, in some circumstances, better. As doctors, we believed they were made of the right stuff. NASA said they were not ready for women in space. It led to us all feeling very frustrated with a degree of consternation at the level of sexism.’ In the 1963 congressional hearing into the space program, John Glenn a space hero after his return on *Friendship 7*, stated: ‘Women are not astronauts because of our social order; that’s the way of life’ (Graham, 1999).

culture and knowledge are 'male'. She acknowledges that the institutional organisation of knowledge operates to marginalise women and to reinforce the gender inequalities in contemporary society and consequently sectors such as the arts:

The social organisation of artistic production over the centuries has systematically excluded women from participation. Although the guilds were not closed to women, in practice it was extremely difficult for them to gain acceptance. With the rise of the Academies³⁶ new obstacles were put in the way of women painters, and in particular the banning of women from life drawing, an essential part of artistic training in the pre-modern period, effectively barred them completely from 'serious' art. The discovery of a number of excellent women painters in the history of art appears all the more surprising, then, when we realise the forces in operation which systematically worked to exclude them from the profession (pp. 42 - 43).

Wolff's most important recommendation concerning women working in the arts is to consider the range of factors which have affected their practice, particularly the social contexts they were operating in:

We study art and literature as totally separate from the political and social circumstances in which they are produced and consumed. This historical segregation of areas of investigation has other kinds of implications for knowledge, criticism, and power relations, apart from questions raised by feminism. But from the point of view of gender inequalities, it is clear that it is more or less impossible to address these issues within the framework of the mainstream academic tradition. To make any sense of the question of why there have been so few successful women artists, we need to look at extra-aesthetic processes – the social, ideological and economic situation of women, the institutions and practices of the arts in a particular period in terms of their social, financial, material organisation, and so on. In short, a sociological perspective is essential in each of the disciplines,

³⁶ In Paris this occurred in 1648 and in London 1768.

to make clear the circumstances which produce certain limited types of knowledge and certain particular gender imbalances (pp. 70 - 71).

During my search for sustainable and successful collaborative practice in the arts it was interesting to note the majority of collaborations are weighted towards women.

The Perception of Art Making

The separation between art and craft existed until the 1960s, when craft writers argued that craftspeople should be perceived in the same way as painters and sculptors, and receive similar status in the art world. Cochrane (1992) described this as an unconscious association with the ideology of the nineteenth century Arts and Craft Movement (p. 315). She further explained that because no other context was provided for craft work it necessarily adopted the paradigm used by the art world:

Many aspired to an art world framework that conferred a socially constructed privilege on painting and sculpture, and the perception of the artist as someone separate from society. Having rejected what was seen as the inhumanity of the machine and most of what industry stood for, those working in clay, fibre, wood, metal, glass and leather had no alternative, at that time, but to emulate the system used by painting and sculpture, because the art world as a system provided or validated no other mechanism for sale, display or review (p. 316).

Dormer (1997) noted that the values implicit in the Arts and Crafts Movement: social continuity, personal creativity, and fulfilment through making are as compelling in contemporary society as they were then. Yet, the community ethos of craft has been undermined by its purpose of consumption which exists in a cultural tradition obsessed with genius and the cult of celebrity:

The craftspeople also needs a 'name' to achieve market success. The promotional apparatus of craft, including exhibitions, catalogues and gallery shops, is directly and deliberately copied from the art world, and is calculated to establish individual reputation in just the same way (p. 121).

Contemporary craft theorists argued that the term ‘craft’ has transcended its traditional role and meaning. There has been a disassociation with the physical experience of contemporary craft making, as many specialised tasks are now performed through technological means. Dormer (1997) stated: ‘computer technology now provides craft with its most serious philosophical and practical challenges’ (p. 137). Computers are now able to produce objects of large quantity and precision which are virtually impossible for a single craftsperson to match. Although human choice has been involved with setting up the computers and parameters of the particular design, there was no ‘hands-on’ making. Dormer noted that this type of situation has provided a wealth of possibilities and contradictions for the crafts:

On the one hand our very notion of what it is to *make* something is being transformed; on the other, the importance of hands-on making is not thereby removed by computer technology’s ability to ‘make’ everything. For it is conceivable that different kinds of making provide different kinds of understanding (p. 137).

By the 1980s there were craftspeople known as designer-makers who would design and then contract aspects of the work to their assistant or an outside specialist business (Cochrane, 1992, p. 319). This is similar to the practice some contemporary artists engage in.³⁷ The complex and diverse nature of art and craft practice reflected changing societal attitudes, advances in technology and a blurring of media and processes between art and craft. This has resulted in the status of particular disciplines being both rejected and/or reaccepted in different periods, particularly if they also serve a utilitarian purpose. As McGrath (2002) stated:

Art forms operating within the contexts of utility and aesthetics are very often be-devilled by the artistic fashion of the times. The rise and fall of interest in an art form reflects a generation’s perception of the practice, particularly the extent to which the product of the creative endeavour is able to give meaning to ideas surrounding contemporary life ... Like other functional art forms the imperative of utility has often been viewed by

³⁷ See for example the work of Patricia Picinini, Jeff Koons or Dale Chihuly.

critics, theorists and artists as an impediment to the language of art. This elitist and somewhat narrow view of what art is sidelines a very considerable body of creative work that offer us insights into the nature of human existence.

This statement was also supported by Dormer (1997) who proposed that the collapse in status of one kind of art was neither new nor easily explainable. He explained that it was a shift in aesthetic appreciation: ‘Whole generations are no longer moved by that which enthralled earlier generations’ (p. 4). Sawyer (2006) used the example of photography which was not considered to be fine art when it was invented, and only became so one hundred years later. He explained that changes in the sociocultural system enabled photography to be accepted by the art world (p. 25).

Isaak (1996) reflected that although other fields critiqued their methodological assumptions, art history continued to employ a methodology that reproduced the cultural hegemony of the dominant class, race, and gender and rationalised the basis of patriarchy in capitalist societies. Isaak describes this as men’s control over women’s labour, power, sexuality, and access to symbolic representation (p. 47). Chadwick (1996) noted that the contemporary feminist movement in the arts which occurred in the late 1960s forced an overdue analysis of art history and explored ‘the ways that art historical institutions and discourses have shaped the dynamics that continually subordinate female artists to male’ (p. 8). Chadwick also described important dichotomies which exist in society and art history:

Early feminist analyses focused new attention on the work of remarkable women artists *and* on unequalled traditions of domestic and utilitarian production by women. They also revealed the way that the work of women had been presented in a negative relation to creativity and high culture. Feminist analyses pointed to the ways that the binary oppositions of Western thought – man/woman, nature/culture, analysis/intuition – have been replicated within art history and used to reinforce sexual difference as a basis for aesthetic valuations. Qualities associated with “femininity,” such as “decorative,” “precious,” miniature”, “sentimental,”

“amateur”, etc., have provided a set of negative characteristics against which to measure “high art” (p. 9).

These binary oppositions are not neutral and therefore have reinforced widely held social values and beliefs, ultimately influencing how the art world privileges particular forms of art, artists and writings about art. The judgements of the art world ultimately affected the perception of how artists and craftspeople see themselves:

... people want the status of being an artist as a value in its own right. The status of being an artist is almost a tradable ‘invisible’ commodity within the art, craft and design world. Its value is kept high by protectionism. Being an ‘artist’ may not make you wealthy but it enables you to be considered for the more important exhibitions and public collections, as well as mainstream news coverage and consideration by the critics (Dormer, 1997, p. 6).

There are a number of inherent tensions in the perception of art making related both to social and cultural factors. Art and craft have been to some extent gendered in their histories and has resulted in some forms of expression being privileged over others.

Collaboration and Relationships

The texts *Significant Others* (Chadwick & De Courtivron, 1993) and *Between the Lives* (Shepard, 2005) both examined the relationships of couples, who shared a strong and in most cases, a sexual relationship, working in the field of arts. Chadwick and De Courtivron directed the contributing authors to analyse the partnerships in relation to creativity and gender issues. The dominant theme which underpinned *Significant Others* was that creativity demanded a solitary existence; therefore, only one person in a partnership can be considered a genius. It appeared that although the term collaboration was not used in the text, the definition of partnership between the couples sought to portray an equal relationship. The essays mostly revealed that the chief protagonists redefined accepted gender and sexual stereotypes within their relationship, creating a less defined role for one another. Ultimately, however, society determined who would be considered the most successful. This text only dealt with

successful collaborations; however, researching the factors which resulted in unsuccessful collaborations would have also provided significant insights in this area.

In 2005 Deborah Shepard published *Between the Lives* a text which investigated intimate partnerships between people living in New Zealand from the fields of art, filmmaking, and writing. The format was similar to that used in *Significant Others*, where each person in the partnership is examined. There did however seem to be a greater emphasis on the societal expectations of men in this text, which provided a more rounded view of the dilemmas facing artists from both genders. The context of *Significant Others* was based on mostly successful international artistic couples, whereas *Between the Lives* focuses on nationally famous artists in New Zealand. Shepard provided a more personal and domestic account of how many of the women in the partnerships sacrificed their own promising art career for that of their partner. The societal and gender expectations of the time in which they lived, and the complexity of maintaining a relationship, with the additional responsibilities of children, were emotionally, yet clearly articulated from interviews and documents. The stories of the couples were well written and exhaustively researched, however Shepard did not provide a concluding chapter with which to articulate a position regarding this information. The strength of the text was its ability to examine a range of partnerships and to provide the societal context to enable the reader to consider what characteristics are necessary for artistic couples to work together and what factors disrupted or disabled this process.

Group Portrait (1982) by Nicholas Delbanco examined the collaborative writings of Joseph Conrad, Stephen Crane, Ford Madox Ford, Henry James and H.G. Wells. Delbanco began with the proposition that novelists avoid collaboration, although he stated that there are noted occasions when they have actively sought to work together.³⁸ His focus on the writers mentioned above concerned the fact that in 1900 they were all neighbours by choice, not circumstance. Each of the writers was also at odds with societal expectations which Delbanco proposed gave them ‘artistic licence’ in their writing, and in the ways they conducted their lives. The relationships between the men were friendly not intimate. Delbanco concluded this may have been due to

³⁸ Delbanco describes two noted occasions as Paris in the 1920s and the Bloomsbury Group in London.

the absence of talented women who most likely would have created a salon to encourage relationships amongst the participants. Ironically, he also revealed that talented women were kept to one side. Although some were more than mistress-muses, they had relatively little contact with the men's work. The evidence suggested that perceived male superiority or ego may have resulted in the exclusion of women, particularly given Ford's later association with the Australian artist Stella Bowen.³⁹

Overall *Group Portrait*, provided an interesting account of the writers' interactions with each other, but it did not reveal the emotional interactions integral to *Significant Others* and *Between the Lives*. It is also notable in that it is a retrospective retelling of this time with information obtained from documents such as letters and books and not interviews. None of the men concerned gave up their writing to advance the writing of a significant other, or undertook domestic tasks such as shopping, cooking, or washing clothes. The different societal expectations of women and men are clearly evident in this text. The writing process, aspects of which can be identified as collaborative, between Joseph Conrad and Ford Madox Ford is described as follows:

We would write for whole days, for half nights, for half the day or all the night. We would jot down passages on scraps of paper or on the margins of books, handing them one to the other or exchanging them. We would roar with laughter over passages that would have struck no other soul as humorous; Conrad would howl with rage and I would almost sigh over others that no other soul perhaps would have found as bad as we considered them. We would recoil one from the other and go each to our own cottage – our cottages at that period never being further the one from the other than an old mare could take us in an afternoon. In those cottages we would prepare other drafts and so drive backwards and forwards with packages of manuscript under the dog-cart seats (Delbanco, 1982, pp 18 - 19).

The emotional intensity evident in a collaborative process appeared to be perceptible in this extract, although there was not enough detail of the actual process to accurately

³⁹ For further information about the relationship between Stella Bowen and Ford Madox Ford see Drusilla Modjeska's *Stravinsky's Lunch* (1999).

conclude this. It was interesting to note that domestic issues were rarely mentioned throughout this text, they were only evident when women were providing domestic, emotional and/or financial support.

An insight into Ford's perception of women is provided in *Stravinsky's Lunch* (1999). Drusilla Modjeska has vividly recounted the lives of two Australian women artists, Grace Cossington Smith and Stella Bowen. Bowen began a relationship with Ford in 1918, after his return from the war, and a few years after his writing relationship with Conrad. Ford was a notorious philanderer and although Bowen described him as her 'true love' he saw most women as a muse to inspire his writing. Bowen and Ford's relationship was a very different one to those enjoyed by the male writers in *Group Portrait*. This was clearly evident from the description of their lives in 1920 when Stella was pregnant and she and Ford moved to a small cottage in England without modern amenities:

What she discovered at Coopers Cottage was that love and art, those two great desires, did not sit together as easily as she had hoped when she accepted Ford's invitation. Of course she couldn't attend to her own work when her heart and time were focused on Ford and Julie. Her care for what she called Ford's 'working conditions' meant running the house and tending their child, and protecting him from every interruption and anxiety. The word she used to describe her role was 'shock absorber', and on the whole shock-absorbers don't get to paint (p. 64).

Bowen was fulfilling the role of the 'angel in the home' which has been fostered through the Victorian ideal of domesticity. Ford had structured their lives on patriarchal lines, which resulted in Bowen being unable to 'nurture an independent ego' (Modjeska, 1999, p. 66). As Modjeska noted, Ford needed the services of a reliable wife or else he could not write at all. In his preface to *The Good Soldier* he referred to Bowen when he wrote: 'What I am now I owe to you. Without you spurring me to write I should never have written again.' This tribute to the muse has appeared as a recurring theme in the lives of male artists (Callen, 1979; Prose, 2002). Pateman (1991) stated: 'Talented women are commonly identified with the muse which

suggests that their role is to provide inspiration for male artistic creativity and to sublimate their own talent' (p. 48).

Francine Prose in *The Lives of the Muses* (2002) investigated the role of the muse through literature, art and music, and how they inspired various artists from Lewis Carroll to John Lennon. Prose's premise was that falling in love was the closest that most people come to transcendence, and therefore passion becomes the model for understanding inspiration. By covering such a large period of time, Prose allowed the reader to understand that each era endowed the muse with 'the qualities, virtues and flaws that the epoch and its artists need and deserve' (p. 7), referring to the societal context in which the artist and muse lived. Prose acknowledged however, that male muses are rare although there was no biological reason why a man cannot provide the elements of inspiration. She also conceded that:

Whether we like it or not, the distribution of power is simply different, depending on the gender of the artist and the muse ... Not entirely coincidentally, the various subsidiary activities included in the muse's job description – nurturing, sustaining, supporting, encouraging – are traditionally considered to be women's work (p. 12).

The muses documented in this text, were seemingly aware of the demotion that domesticity, in the guise of a wife, would bring, and they took extreme measures to avoid this situation:

The willed or instinctive strategies they employed to avoid becoming the sturdy linchpins holding together the machinery of daily art production range widely. Mrs. Thrale resisted by having servants to do the work of the art wife; Lizzie Siddal rendered herself helpless with opium addiction; Lou Andreas-Salomé withheld sex; Lee Miller protected her interests with competence, restlessness, and flight, and later with drinking and depression. Alice Liddell had her youth and ferocious mother; Gala Dalí her own nastiness. Suzanne Farrell nearly sacrificed her career to avoid becoming an art wife, while Yoko Ono attempted to persuade Lennon that he *was* one (Prose, p. 16).

The Lives of the Muses included instances where the muse became an artist in her own right, which Gilson described as the aggressive faux-muse⁴⁰, and in some cases an important collaborator with the artist, before forging her own independent identity. This was particularly evident in accounts of Lee Miller's life. When she was twenty-two years old she travelled from New York to Europe to volunteer as an assistant to the artist Man Ray. Miller was an independent and high-spirited woman who had been expelled from private schools in New York. She had blackmailed her parents into allowing her to travel through Europe on the provision that she would not allow one of New York's prominent photographers to photograph her naked. Miller was the epitome of society's 'new woman' – an independent woman who had fled the stifling domesticity of late Victorian culture. Miller persuaded Man Ray to take her on as his pupil, and in the process she also became his 'assistant, model, collaborator and lover' (Calvocoressi, 2002, p. 16).

Miller undertook the studio photography and darkroom duties in order to allow Man Ray quality time, in which to paint. However, her interest and experimentation in photography produced a collaborative portfolio of photographs, which bear multiple authorship. Their collaboration from 1929 – 1932 was so close that often they could not identify whose work it was. Miller stated: 'There are many of them [photographs] which are attributed to Man, on which I helped, including the superb nude, *Primat de la Matière de la Pensée* ... I do not know if it was I who made them ... But that's of no importance ... we were nearly the same person at work' (Chadwick, 1985, p. 56). Penrose (1988) noted that Miller and Man Ray's mutual respect was such that 'neither of them was seriously concerned when their credits were wrongly ascribed' (p. 30). However, a revealing incident occurred when Man Ray discarded a photograph of Miller's face and neck, which she retrieved and perfected until she was satisfied with the image. Although Man Ray was impressed with the result, he was furious when Miller claimed it as her work of art (Penrose, 1988, p. 30). Ironically, Miller's face and body immortalised by Man Ray in his work achieved greater success than her work, which she finally abandoned. Her final break with Man Ray was reached

⁴⁰ Gilson, E. (1953) *A Choir of Muses*, translated by Maisie Ward. New York: Sheed and Ward, cited in Francine Prose, *The Lives of the Muses* (2002), p. 17.

through their differences of opinion regarding their relationship; in addition to her success as a fashion photographer for *Vogue* magazine. As Penrose noted:

Lee and Man Ray made a fruitful partnership: she posed for him, and he tutored her. They lived and loved together, but it cannot have been easy. Even for the totally dedicated Surrealist, the basic tenet of free love must have conflicted with the basic instincts of possession and jealousy. Lee was more successful than most in upholding this principle. She rarely allowed loyalty to a current lover to conflict with her sexual desires, stating that she went to bed with whomever she chose, and why should that affect the person she loved? The doctrine of free love had largely been constructed from a male standpoint. Lee exposed the hypocrisy of its double standards, to the chagrin and bewilderment of the men around her (1988, p. 23).

Miller challenged both social and cultural stereotypes existing at that time. Prose (2002) suggested that a common motif in the lives of the muses was inspiration, which she perceived as a social and communal activity. Miller succeeded in transforming herself from muse to an artist in her own right. Collaboration is based on solid relationships between participants and therefore intimacy between couples can foster, or just as easily destroy this process.

Social systems and Art

The following binary oppositions have become evident in the review of literature: Male/Female, Individual/Group, Art/Craft, and Artist/Artisan. This revealed that each of these tensions were evident in the collaborative process, yet acknowledges their intrinsic integration within the process itself. These binary oppositions also intersect and react with the social system they were operating within. Binary oppositions have been used - although it was not the purpose of this study to investigate language structure - to signal to the reader the implications inherent in the way language is associated with and can affect the perception of gender. These binary oppositions are concepts or signifiers, which although arranged in pairs, actually oppose each other in a dichotomous way. The use of binary oppositions also subconsciously invokes a form of hierarchy. 'One form of the opposition is always privileged over the other,

suggesting that it is primary rather than secondary, positive rather than negative' (Adams, 1991, p. 69). Greater value also tends to be placed on the first word in the pair, which can 'play a critical role in shaping the ways we read an image and our emotional and intellectual responses to it' (Emmison & Smith, 2000, p. 67). If the first word from each pair is combined together the relationship becomes: Male/Individual/Art/Artist. The second word from each pair results in Female/Group/Craft/Artisan.

This study acknowledges that the paradigm of contemporary Western society has been based on a patriarchal and therefore hierarchical foundation (Harlan, 1998; Mumby, 1996; Reinharz, 1992; Tong, 1995; Wolff, 1990). Harlan (1998) traced the origin of this culturally imposed way of thinking to the ancient Greeks:

... popular culture embraced the idea of right- and left-brain activities and of feminine and masculine attributes of all personalities (a model now called essentialism). Some feminists expressed concern that the traits were being identified as feminine (female) and masculine (male). They argued that this approach used an ancient dichotomy harking back to the Greeks, when popular thought was that men have reason, women have feelings; and to the Victorians, who created different spheres for men and women, with logic and business being men's domain, and emotion and home being women's (p. 11).

Montuori and Purser (1995) argued that the conception of self and the link to the individual genius myth was inextricably bound to its sociological and political context. Challenges to the universal dominance of the Western male-centred concept of self has been led by notions of social constructionism, feminism, and gender theory (Belenky et al., 1986; Harlan, 1998; Kline, 1993; Lorber, 1994; Tong, 1995; Weisberg, 1993), systems theory (Ceruti, 1994; Csikszentmihalyi, 1995), and group theory (Bensimon, 1993; Brown, 1991; Clift et al., 1995; Lawrence, 2004; McDermott, 2002; Pike, Brent, MacEachren, Gahegan, & Chaoqing, 2005; Toseland & Rivas, 1998) These theories challenged the popular concept of the lone genius who stood in opposition to tradition and social conformity and therefore was perceived to be disengaged and separated from society. This perception inevitably created a divide between a person who was identified as a genius, and society:

Creative individuals certainly face societal pressures and constraints, and their lives are at times indeed heroic. Our point is that a romanticised (and pathologised), reductionist view of creative genius establishes a fundamentally negative relationship between creative individuals and community that actively perpetuates precisely the kind of stereotypical problems creative individuals have to suffer by establishing for them almost *a priori* a pathologised role in the context of society ... this individualist struggle against the masses does not allow us to focus on the at times beneficial roles of social interaction and, most importantly, on the possibility of creating environments that actively foster creativity, because creativity is viewed strictly as an individual phenomenon (Montuori & Purser, 1995, p. 76).

Systems theory has been an important model to explain the processes which have occurred in particular systems. This theory proposes that there are three dimensions to a system: the what (knowledge, resources and structure), the how (activities and behaviours that emerge) and the context (the setting in which the content and processes exist) (Sharpnack, 2005). Ceruti (1994) described a systems functioning as being determined by a web of interrelationships and interactions of its parts. Csikszentmihalyi (1995) utilised systems theory to propose a systems model of creativity. He outlined three main elements necessary for creative endeavours to occur: the person (what), culture (how) and the social system (context).

In this model, each of the three main elements affected the others and was affected by them. In the art world the elements could easily be substituted for artist, art world and culture (Weisberg, 1993). Csikszentmihalyi (1995) proposed that social processes which operated in a social system determine what was creative. The 'field' or society then selected the most promising innovations and incorporated them into the domain:

We cannot study creativity by isolating individuals and their works from the social and historical milieu in which their actions are carried out. This is because what we call creative is never the result of individual action alone; it is the product of three main shaping forces: a set of social

institutions, or *field*, that selects from the variations produced by individuals those that are worth preserving; a stable cultural *domain* that will preserve and transmit the selected new ideas or forms to the following generations; and finally the *individual*, who brings about some change in the domain, a change that the field will consider to be creative (p. 325).

Both John Dewey (1934) and R.G. Collingwood (1938) emphasised that all creativity involved social and interactional processes. They felt that because art was a communicative language this was a logical outcome. Dewey's communication theory of art (1938) proposed that improvisation, collaboration and emergence were central to all creativity; even when an artist was alone there was a public and social aspect to their creativity. Marxist theory treated art as a social and material practice which was affected by the society it was created in. Pateman (1991) described how art in this context was the labour and product of a number of people. He contended that this meant art was not value-free. Pateman stated: 'Marxists are concerned with the extent to which the received beliefs of groups and classes within society, especially those of the dominant class which controls the means of reproduction, are reproduced in art and literature' (p. 101). He concluded by saying that although the strength of Marxist critical theory lay in its insistence on the social context in which art was made, its weakness was its tendency to ignore the nature of the creative process. Pateman also revealed that aesthetic experience appeared to have its own autonomy and could transcend the dominant values of any period (p. 105). Sawyer (2003) noted that both Dewey and Collingwood prefigured contemporary theories of creativity that emphasised social and cultural context, such as that proposed by Csikszentmihalyi's creative process model. Csikszentmihalyi stated that creativity involved social judgment and therefore his creative process model: '...seeks to move the concept of creativity from the plane of purely individual (subjective) recognition to a social (intersubjective) arena, wherein the full complexity of creativity can be recognised' (Hooker, Nakamura, & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003, p. 230).

In addition to Csikszentmihalyi's systems theory of creativity, these theories contradicted the traditionally held image of creativity being an individual phenomenon. Montouri (2003) described improvisation as a social virtuosity which reflected our state of mind, our perception of who and where we are, and our

willingness to take risks. Miell (2005) in describing creativity referred to the term emergence as a complex system in which the whole was greater than the sum of the parts. Montouri proposed that order was privileged over disorder and paralleled a trend in the West ‘to focus on the objective, the measurable, the rational and the ordered, at the expense of that which appears subjective, qualitative, emotive and disordered’ (p. 242). Montouri also noted that a recurring theme in the literature on creativity and improvisation was that both the person and the process have seemingly paradoxical qualities, such as trusting their own skills to take risks, sustaining and being sustained by others, and exploring territory that is both familiar and unfamiliar. As Montouri stated these types of paradoxes are difficult to understand because ‘we are not used to ‘thinking together’ terms that we have, culturally and historically, come to view as oppositions’ (p. 243).

The systems view of creativity, which acknowledged the fundamental importance of society in recognizing innovative advances in a particular field, is in opposition to the notion of the individual genius who was seemingly able to succeed in spite of society. The person-centred perspective to creativity has recently been challenged in favour of sociological approaches (Csikszentmihalyi, 1995, 1996; Csikszentmihalyi & Rich, 1997; Farrell, 2001; John-Steiner, 2000; Montuori & Purser, 1999b, 1999c; Paulus, Brown, & Ortega, 1999; Paulus & Nijstad, 2003). Gablik (1984) noted that art is constantly changing because of the influence of society:

Obviously, art does not do the same thing, epoch after epoch, merely changing its style; its function varies enormously from one society to another. Art has always interacted with the social environment; it is never neutral. It may either reflect, reinforce, transform, or repudiate, but it is always in some kind of necessary relation to the social structure. There is always a correlation between society’s values, directions, and motives and the art it produces (p. 51).

Both cultural-historical and feminist theory also supported the belief that it was important to examine beyond the individual narrative when studying human activity, and consider the interrelationship of the self with other people (Acker, 1990; Callen, 1984 - 85; Chadwick, 1996; Emmison & Smith, 2000; Engstedt, 2005; Greer, 1979;

Hellriegel et al., 1992; Isaak, 1996; John-Steiner, 2000; Kerr & Holder, 1999; Kline, 1993; Lorber, 1994; Montuori & Purser, 1995, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c; Mumby, 1996; Parker & Pollock, 1981; Rosener, 1990; Rost, 1991; Weeks, 1994; Werstch, 1985; Wolff, 1981, 1992, 1989, 1990).

In *The Cultural Nature of Human Development* (2003), Rogoff examined a range of cultural processes to emphasise that human development does not function in the same way. She stated: 'There are similarities and differences across cultural communities in expected occupational roles and power for men and women' (p. 190). Rogoff also noted that society placed greater value on work undertaken in the public sphere, as industrialisation effectively separated wage labour undertaken in the home. This shift in emphasis has also affected relationships, which conflict with a family member's work roles and relationships they have forged independently of the family unit.

According to Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberg, and Tarule (1986) the authors of the major theories of human development have been men. This was due to the historically unfounded belief that the development of women's intellectual potential would inhibit the development of their emotional capacities, and subsequently the development of men's emotional capacities would impair their intellectual functioning (p. 7). This has resulted in an emphasis on mental processes that are considered to be abstract and impersonal, the type of thinking that has been attributed to men; whilst the type of mental processes concerned with emotion and personal or interpersonal aspects have been attributed to women (Adler, 1993; Belenky et al., 1986; Brown, 1991; Burns, 1978; Kline, 1993; Miller, 1986; Reed & Garvin, 1983; Rosener, 1990; Rost, 1991; Weeks, 1994; Wolff, 1989).

Rogoff (2003) noted that differences between boys and girls, such as aggression and nurturance, 'reflect a clear relationship to the roles expected of men and women in many cultural communities' (p. 192). In terms of gender, many men have been socialised to be decisive, and therefore processes such as consultation and negotiation with other people can be difficult (Acker, 1990; Brown, 1991; Burns, 1978; Rost, 1991; Toseland & Rivas, 1998). Women are perceived to be nurturers and carers, responsible for maintaining the social networks of the immediate and extended family

through constant interpersonal communication (Chadwick, 1996; Chadwick & De Courtivron, 1993; Fontana & Frey, 2005; Garvin, 1997; Harlan, 1998; John-Steiner, 2000; Mumby, 1996; Olesen, 2005; Parker & Pollock, 1981; Shepard, 2005; Tong, 1995; Wolff, 1981, 1992). There is evidence to suggest that social conditioning (Hunt, 2005; Whiteley, 2005) and to some extent biological predispositions (Eisler, 1995, 2005; Fisher, 2005) enable women to engage in a collaborative process more easily than men. In his discussion of leadership, Gergen (2005) argued that effective leaders must have both masculine and feminine qualities, and it does not really matter whether a 'feminine' style of leadership is in the genes or created by socialisation (p. xxi), effectively denying prominence of either side of the nature/nurture debate.⁴¹

Given these socially entrenched and gendered assumptions about men and women, it has to be expected that these attitudes would prevail in any theories relating to leadership in small or large groups:

It is not surprising that gender differences among children are consistent with the adult roles of the current generation of women and men in many communities around the world. After all, from the earliest years, children participate in and prepare to assume the adult roles of their communities. Developmental transitions across the life span often encourage, test, and celebrate individuals' changing community roles. Developmental transitions in roles across the life span will undoubtedly continue to be closely aligned with cultural communities' traditions and practices. But the nature of those traditions and practices, including those involving gender roles, are likely to change in subtle and not-so-subtle ways with coming generations. At the same time, they are likely to maintain some continuities with roles that humans have developed over millennia, based on biological ecological, and cultural constraints and supports (Rogoff, 2003, p. 193).

Literature pertaining to leadership particularly in organisations during the 1960s and 1970s emphasised the hierarchical nature of leadership, with decisions being made by

⁴¹ Gergen used the words: aggressive, assertive, autocratic, muscular and closed to describe traditional forms of leadership, and consensual, relational, web-based, caring, inclusive, open and transparent to describe a 'feminine' style of leadership (p. xxi).

a small group or individual at the apex of a pyramid structure. However, a more devolved style of leadership has become increasingly more acceptable and encouraged across a range of areas. People undertaking leadership roles in society have been affected by cultural processes throughout their life. The way they practice their leadership is affected by cultural awareness and also by the social system in which they currently operate. Society, and inevitably the art world contain a number of dichotomies which are held in tension and affected by the social system in which they exist. An awareness of these dichotomies and their historical context is important when undertaking any leadership role in the arts. This can be of particular importance when working with and combining the skills of people who identify with an art or craft context:

While craft can certainly embody meaning, and occasionally is recognised by the art world for doing so, craft cannot be anything at all. I believe that the art world recognises this distinction intuitively, and the rejection that craft practitioners often suffer at the hands of art-gallery owners, art-museum curators, and art critics turns on this perception. While the art world places its highest values on verbal and logical cognitive abilities, the craftworld places its value elsewhere. The logical inconsistency of craft makes sense only if measured by the art world's values. These values, however, are far from universal, and may not apply to modern craft (Dormer, 1997, p. 72).

The cultural perceptions of art and craft vary widely across a range of communities, with some cultures not recognising the existence of art in their society. In Western society however, craft has been relegated a lower status when compared with art. The status of craft and the artisan has shifted considerably in history and has been affected by the social system. Walter Benjamin's seminal essay *Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (1936) proposed that 'mechanical' forms of art such as photography, create new social relationships between the artist and the viewer by lessening the 'aura' of art and creating something that is outside the 'tradition' of art.

Individuality, Ego, Authorship

In a range of sectors there has been increasing recognition of the value of collaboration, particularly in areas such as management which has focused on team work and advocated less hierarchical structures than those traditionally espoused in this area (Buzzanell, 1994; Kayser, 1994; Mumby, 1996; Purser & Montuori, 1999; Rost, 1991; Shriberg, Lloyd, Schriberg, & Williamson, 1997).

In human developmental theory, the work of Lev Vygotsky has been utilised to restore the balance between the ‘excesses of a century-long preoccupation with individual development’ (Feldman, 2000, p. ix). Vygotsky’s theories claimed that commitment to relationship is the central ingredient in human development. He considered language to be essential in that it enabled a person to fully participate in a community. The mastery of this ability then allowed full access to the intellectual and cultural resources society had to offer. Vygotsky (1978) proposed that collaborative activity allowed children to imitate one another, demonstrating behaviours that were beyond their individual abilities. The open form of communication, necessary in the collaborative process, also supported the mastery of language as an important aspect of this exchange. Vygotsky proposed that an individual learns through relationships with other individuals and this new knowledge was internalised by the individual and became part of their own development. Littleton et al., (2004) contended that the capacity to collaborate is not an innate quality, but can be developed through a variety of experiences. The authors advocated enhancing collaborative skills by direct teaching and learning in classroom situations (p. 97). Feldman (2000) proposed that Vygotsky’s theories are particularly pertinent when dealing with the complex challenges we are dealing with, both as individuals and in wider society:

We have pushed the theme of individuality to (some might say beyond) its limits, and have recently discovered a framework that helps us see the essential role that relationship, participation, reciprocity, membership, and collaboration must play in any theory of human development that aspires to guide us through the challenges ahead (p. 12).

Western society has been generally described as 'individualistic' compared to the communal nature of indigenous and non-western societies (Gibson & Hodgetts, 1989; Hellriegel et al., 1992; Montuori & Purser, 1999a; Rickards & De Cock, 1999; Warburton & Oppenheimer, 2000). Bennis and Biederman (1997) described contemporary society as living in a by-line culture where recognition and status are accorded to individuals, not groups (p. 2). There has been ongoing tension between the socially indoctrinated view of Western individuality and creativity and the concessions and compromises that are required when people work together in groups. Berman (1999) noted that the brilliance of Western creativity depends on its instability and extremely high level of tension and stress. These elements are not conducive when working in organisational group situations. Group dynamics, particularly in collaborations, usually result in the modification of the behaviour and attitudes of the participants (Brown, 1991; Douglas, 2000; Garvin, 1997; McSweeney & Alexander, 1996; Toseland & Rivas, 1998; Weeks, 1994). There are a variety of factors which affect group dynamics such as hidden agendas, personal differences with other members, poor social skills, language barriers, and financial or voluntary status. However, an important element in this study was identity, and the way people perceive its importance within the group. The issue of identity in relation to the group must be resolved before the group can consider working collaboratively:

Tension often builds up within groups when the interests and needs of a group member conflict with those of the group. The process of individuation, whereby persons differentiate themselves from others, is an attempt to define self-identity in relation to significant other persons. In groups, this kind of socialisation goes on constantly. For group development to advance to its most productive level, the values of self-determination and collaboration must pervade the functioning of the group (Brown, 1991, p. 17).

The notion of identity has been described as ego or authorship in the art world. As stated earlier, Western art history has traditionally been focussed on the individual and therefore 'collaborative creative processes are not valued as highly as individual efforts' (Montuori & Purser, 1999a, p. 16). Antisocial characteristics inherent in the creative individual or 'lone genius' myth have also been perpetuated through art

history. Timms (2004) in *What's Wrong With Contemporary Art?* revealed that the legacy of modernism in art has been a perception that its history does not matter. He also made this connection to society in general:

The great value we put on competitive individualism means a loss of belief in what used to be called the common weal. We have only to look at contemporary political life, where social welfare programs are being progressively whittled away, public utilities privatised and community infrastructures dismantled, to understand the extent to which the special interests of the individual have triumphed over concern for general welfare (p. 125).

Timms' text was provocative and questioned the direct and undisputed relationship which exists between contemporary art and its marketing. He was able to clearly outline the implications of contemporary art in Australia aligning, and therefore distorting itself, to benefit from commercial expectations. Timms also investigated the devaluing of craft in Australia, through the Australia Council's amalgamation of the Visual Arts Board and the Crafts Board in 1986.

Issues related to individuality, ego and authorship are endemic in Western society and have resulted from cultural assumptions related to competitiveness. Rogoff (2003) noted that some communities prioritise cooperation among group members and competition with other groups. She revealed that sometimes competition is prioritised even within a person's closest group. The art world, in addition to other sectors has rewarded artists by selecting their work in biennales, choosing particular artists for international residencies and writing about their work in journals. This competitiveness between members is socially inculcated and therefore the collaborative process, which creates a third identity for participants, requires a different perception towards individuality, ego and authorship.

Conclusion

This chapter defined the terms cooperation, coordination and collaboration and discussed how the word collaboration had been misappropriated to describe a range of working practices. It was evident that the phases of cooperation and coordination

could occur within collaboration as participants developed relationships with one another. As these connections developed and the characteristics cited in various models became evident, the intensive and pervasive phase of collaboration could be identified. The role of community and public artists were examined, in addition to the role that volunteerism has played in many of these projects.

Social and cultural influences on collaborative practice, and the changing role of the artist related to the emergence of the artist from the guild system of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. These historical origins have informed the way artists are perceived in contemporary society. The guilds utilised skilled workers who realised the vision of the Master, yet there was some evidence that they retained a degree of autonomy in this process (Cole, 1983; De Vecchi, 1994; Lightbrown, 1980; Maginnis, 1995). This is an arrangement which has been redeployed by modern and contemporary artists. In some cases artists have described this arrangement as collaborative, however the extent to which this can be verified relies on defining the collaborative process itself and examining issues such as authorship, acknowledgment and the working process, including shared intellectual decision making that has occurred. The context for examining collaborative processes in art history revealed that art has operated in a social system, even though the stereotype of the artist encouraged estrangement from society. The separation of the artist and artisan effectively elevated the status of art above that of craft, connected gender to various forms of making, and created a separation between artists and their communities. The historical opposition in the art world to collaboration in the arts has been the perception that social interaction dilutes genius. Due to the entrenched notion of the individual genius, it has taken around five hundred years for artists who are working with collaborative processes to achieve legitimacy within the stereotypically perceived individual genius paradigm.

Throughout art history there have been a number of movements such as Dadaism, Surrealism, the Bauhaus, Pop Art and Conceptual Art⁴² which have reacted to art's

⁴² Dada (1916 – 22) aimed to destroy art by using ridicule, surprise and sensational subjects. Dada then developed into Surrealism (1924 – 1939) which used fantastic dream-like compositions of highly detailed objects. The Bauhaus (1919 – 33) was a school of art and craft with the aim of linking creative expression and construction. Dada, Surrealism and the Bauhaus were all deeply critical of established fine art assumptions and institutions. Pop Art (1953 – 1970) used mass media subjects as the basis of

value being increasingly defined by its economic worth, and not spiritual, intellectual or emotional content (Gablik, 1984, pp 39 - 40). Artists in these movements challenged the idea of authorship and originality through the employment of assistants, or the appropriation of other artists' work (Heartney, 1989; McCabe, 1984; Strickland, 2003; Sultan, 2004). This precedent had already been acknowledged in art history, where there has been a tradition of quotation in which artists reconfigure or reinterpret past works (Clark, 1996).⁴³ Modern artists began to move outside traditional boundaries of subject matter and media. The distinction between art and craft became increasingly blurred as artists used traditional craft media and techniques to create works, or utilised found objects they did not create and classified them as art (Elinor, Richardson, Scott, Angharad, & Walker, 1987; Gablik, 1984; Orta & Smith, 2003; Rabinovitz, 1980 - 81; Shiner, 2001a).

The next section investigates collaborative processes through a number of other sectors including the arts, technology, and the community and education, in order to provide both comparison and contrast to how collaboration operates in the arts sector. The intricate link between creativity and collaboration will also be examined with particular emphasis on group organisational contexts.

art imagery. Andy Warhol's mass produced silkscreened images from the early 1960s challenged the uniqueness of art. The Conceptual Art movement which originated in New York and Europe during the late 1960s emphasised the concept rather than a physical art work. In this way the artists subverted the notion of ownership and the inimitable nature of art itself.

⁴³ Marcus Wills the winner of the 2006 Archibald Prize based his painting titled *The Paul Juraszek Monolith (after Marcus Gheeraerts)* on an etching called *Allegory of Iconoclasm* by the 16th century Flemish artist Marcus Gheeraerts the Elder. This strategy of reconfiguring works of the past has been employed by many artists such as Edouard Manet, Pablo Picasso and Jeff Koons.

Chapter 3: Practices of Collaboration

As revealed in the previous chapter, the term collaboration has been used in various sectors to cover a wide range of practices which are more cooperative or coordinated. There are various reasons for the increased emphasis on collaboration, including changes in leadership structures, a re-evaluation of societal roles for men and women and economic and human benefits. The following sections will describe how collaboration has been described in the arts, technology, the community and education.

The Arts

The arts sector, particularly music and theatre, has traditionally used collaborative practices. There has been a tacit acceptance in society that artists will require support in terms of facilities, materials, and perhaps specialised people to realise their work. As Becker (1982) explains, this form of assistance does not diminish the irreducible element of the artists' presence within the process:

Participants in the making of art works, and members of society generally, regard some of the activities necessary to the production of a form of art as "artistic," requiring the special gifts or sensibility of an artist. They further regard those activities as the core activities of art, necessary to make the art work rather than (in the case of objects) an industrial product, a craft item, or a natural object. The remaining activities seem to them a matter of craft, business acumen, or some other ability less rare, less characteristic of art, less necessary to the work's success, less worthy of respect. They define the people who perform these other activities as (to borrow a military term) support personnel, reserving the title of "artist" for those who perform the core activities (pp. 16 - 17).

Patricia Piccinini, who represented Australia at the Venice Biennale in 2004, outsources the production of her creations. These assistants have been described ostensibly as specialists in their fields, and as collaborators with Piccini. However, if the art world acknowledged specialists such as these, then they too would be

considered artists. Although Piccinini's partner Peter Hennessey has been described as her collaborator, Strickland notes this did not sit easily with the expectations of the art world:

It's not hard to imagine some in the art world sniping about Hennessey's omnipresence and why they sometimes find themselves negotiating with him when they ask for Piccinini. Nor surprisingly [Jan] Michin is keen to dispel any notion that Hennessey is a dual creator of her client's work, but acknowledges his pivotal role in Piccinini's life and in the creation of her art (2003, p. 16).

Becker (1982) stated that there must be a limit as to how little core activity a person can do and still be considered an artist (p. 19). Susan McCulloch, the national art critic for *The Australian* has been apprehensive about artists who outsource to specialists in order to create their work: 'The process of making the work is important to art, that direct tactile contact gives a better sense of rhythm to it, otherwise the temptation is for it to become the studio work of someone else' (Strickland, 2003, p. 17).

In the arts it is quite clear that the importance of cooperative work in areas such as film, musical performance, and the theatre has been vital, given the large numbers of skilled people required to provide expertise at any given time. In describing the directing process Travis (1997) stated: 'While a very personal journey, it is also a series of collaborations, intimate and vibrant relationships with other artists that will eventually bring everyone to the point of mutually creating one piece of work' (p. 4). Support is necessary for artists, particularly for those just starting their careers, who often face loneliness, poverty and doubts about their ability. As John-Steiner (2000) noted: 'Creative work requires a trust in oneself that is virtually impossible to sustain alone' (p. 8). However, it is important to differentiate between what constitutes support and what can be claimed to be collaboration.

Green (2001) contends that collaboration essentially manipulates the figure of the artist involving 'a deliberately chosen alteration of artistic identity from individual to composite subjectivity' (p. ix). This observation may also support why the recognition

of multiple authorship has only occurred recently, due to the reluctance of recognising that 'artistic genius' is not the sole prerogative of one artist working in a group, but can be shared amongst its members. This shift in artistic identity originated in the work of Marcel Duchamp who subverted the idea of the 'art object' to include objects that were already made, but which had been identified and used by the artist as art. This conceptual shift in thinking towards what constituted art, and therefore artists, also extended to the role of galleries. Artists challenged the fact that art could be exhibited outside of the gallery context and still be called art. This debate gained momentum during the latter half of the twentieth century and particularly during the decades of the 1960s and 1970s, when art movements such as Conceptual Art, Earth Art, Performance Art and Minimalism challenged the perceived boundaries of art and the stereotype of the artist.

Therefore in the arts there are a number of different types of working arrangements which purport to be collaborative. The first involves the use of paid professionals such as specialists, who have been asked to make a particular aspect or all of the work to a certain specification. However, the artist and the specialist have not originated, evolved and discussed ideas together. The artist may have sought the advice of the specialist in order to decide which way to proceed with a particular material or technique, but ultimately the decision is that of the artist, and they have paid for this service. Contemporary artists who have used this method to produce their work include Jeff Koons and Patricia Piccinini. Another type of collaboration occurs when an artist wishes to work collaboratively, but in fact they are the designer of a pre-conceived concept who has managed to enthuse predominately skilled workers (probably not artists), in a voluntary capacity to work together to produce a monumental work. This work by its very nature will most definitely reflect the perceived collaborative nature of the project. There is the capacity for a transformative experience to take place amongst the workers who are able to realise the artist's design, and in the process develop camaraderie between themselves and hopefully the artist. Some contemporary artists who have used this process include: Judy Chicago who created *The Dinner Party*, Christo and Jeanne Claude who have worked on numerous environmental projects with the community including *Running Fence*, and Kay Lawrence who produced *The Parliament House Embroidery* with the skills of embroiderers from each of the state and territory guilds in Australia.

In music, the term collaboration was linked to the seamless form of communication which occurred in jazz ensembles (Berliner, 1994; Miell et al., 2005; Monson, 1996). Monson (1996) described good jazz improvisation as a conversation which was sociable and interactive. Berliner (1994) noted the highest point of improvisation in a jazz ensemble occurred when the group members struck a ‘groove’ together,¹ ‘defining and maintaining a solid rhythmic ground for their musical explorations’ (p. 388). Although there may be groups that are rhythmically attuned to each other, it was their individual response, expertise and receptiveness which achieved this form of musical collaboration:

The qualities of a group’s groove, achieved through masterful manipulation of musical elements, ultimately transcend the technical features of jazz to provide improvisers with a rich, varied experience, a dimension of which is distinctly joyful and sensual. Within the groove, improvisers experience a great sense of relaxation, which increases their powers of expression and imagination. At such times, the facility artists’ display as individual music thinkers combines with their extraordinary receptiveness to each other. It is the combining of such talents in the formulation of parts that raises these periods of communal creativity to a supreme level (Berliner, 1994, pp 388 - 389).

Musicians interviewed for Berliner’s text *Thinking in Jazz*, also commented that the interaction described above was similar to a good conversation. The musicians also felt when they were ‘in the groove’ they felt ‘locked into’ the group. When this occurred they did not wish to disengage from the group and were unaware of time passing. These are also elements described in Csikszentmihalyi’s theory of ‘flow’, a theory which proposed that people will enjoy an optimal experience when a common set of conditions are present, namely:

... clear specific goals; immediate feedback; a balance between the opportunities for actions (challenges) and the person’s ability to act

¹ Berliner describes ‘striking a groove’ as a feature of group interaction that requires the negotiation of a shared sense of the beat.

(skills). Given these conditions, a person will begin to focus concentration and forget personal problems, will begin to feel in control, will lose critical self-consciousness, will lose track of time, and eventually will begin to feel that whatever the activity is, it is worth doing for its own sake. This is primarily the reason why people are willing to engage in activities – such as sports, games, art and music – that provide few conventional rewards like money or fame (Csikszentmihalyi & Rich, 1997, pp 48 - 49).

Flow has also been identified in the collaborative process, when people feel valued, are communicating on the same level, are working towards the same goals and are able to achieve something they could not have done individually. The element of flow can be identified in the definition of collaboration for this study as the intense aspect of collaboration. It is also evident that communication channels are working well in order for flow to occur.

An article by Morrison (2005) detailed the importance of his perception of the collaborative relationship between editors and writers. He noted that this relationship can become derailed due to the pressures of time and money. Although Morrison noted that some editors in the past had long standing and supportive relationships with particular writers, in the contemporary world this is not always the case. Literary writing is an art and publishing books is a business. As in the art world, there are some editors who eschew their mentoring role replacing it with marketing strategies. This strategy becomes clear during notable events such as award giving ceremonies which are frequently surrounded in controversy regarding the artistic merit of the winner.² Morrison's article also proposed that the hostile image of the editor can be traced to Romantic ideology which elevated the writer to lone genius status, and the editor to someone tampering with a masterpiece. This accusation can also be made against anyone who has been perceived to be interfering with artistic genius, which Morrison identified as a: 'writer's friends, family and publishers, whose suggestions

² A recent article about the literary Man Booker Prize stated that: 'It's all about the buzz: the buzz boosts book sales and the buzz makes somebodies out of fabulous nobodies. While the familiar apples and oranges argument applies here, as in any book v book contest, artistic reservations tend to be swept away by the winner's cash prize' (Waldren, 2006, p. 19).

can only dilute or contaminate the pure spring of inspiration'.³ Morrison failed to recognise the importance of the social system to writers and appeared to subscribe to the individual genius working in a solitary manner. By diluting the collaborative process to monetary terms he failed to acknowledge the important elements of the relationship being used in the definition for this study.

Sawyer, (2006) in *Explaining Creativity*, investigated improvisational theatre, a form of theatre in which the actors take their cues from the audience for a location to begin the scene or to start the dialogue. Performers use these suggestions to improvise scenes. Sawyer also noted that other forms of theatre, such as those that are scripted, required collaboration, so that the delivered lines sound like natural human dialogue. He argued that group performance genres were fundamentally collaborative, although 'observing this collaboration on-stage was relatively straightforward, compared to the difficulties of observing the many forms of collaboration, sometimes over long periods of time, that contribute to the generation of a work of art' (Sawyer, 2003, p. 98). Sawyer's discussion of improvisation and its role in the collaborative process was well described. He emphasised process rather than product, and identified that effective communication channels needed to be in place. Sawyer also noted that there was a commitment by the participants involved in group performance genres, and relationships between the performers were well established. The relationship to the audience however was short-lived and quite intense, yet it usually worked well because the performers 'assume that the audience shares a large body of cultural knowledge and references' (Sawyer, 2003, p. 110).

Technology

Because of its ability to speed up communication processes, as well as its inclusion in many diverse areas, technology has increasingly become an important element in many collaborative processes. Many of the traditional tools used to collaborate, such as phone calls, letters, and personal conversations are both time consuming, and at

³ Morrison refers to two infamous cases to illustrate this point. The first was the writer Ted Hughes who was accused of 'suppressing' Sylvia Plath when he rearranged the original edition of *Ariel* and left out certain passages from her Letters and Journals. This was unfortunately connected to a suspicion that he had driven her to suicide, which was seen to be silencing her twice over. A similar allegation was made against Percy Bysshe Shelley, for the changes he made to his wife Mary's novel *Frankenstein*.

times, inappropriate for the speed of communication required. The opportunity to meet face to face with the other person or persons on the team to discuss, brainstorm and challenge each other's opinions is an important aspect of collaboration.

Technology has enabled people to meet through videoconference, allowing team members to meet regionally, state-wide, nationally and internationally in order to meet in real-time. However, if the video quality is poor, or there are delays in transmission, it can affect the ability of the participants to communicate clearly and can jeopardise the collaborative process. Pike, Brent, MacEachren, Gahegan & Chaoqing (2005) described a successful videoconference as 'one in which the conferencing tool itself recedes from participants' attention, allowing them to focus on their colleagues rather than the communication medium' (p. 12).

The advances in Information Technology (IT) are growing exponentially, as evidenced in the types of technologies available to the general public in western society such as mobile/camera phones; ipods; handheld computers and access to satellite cable transmissions. The speed and availability of information can be of enormous benefit to researchers and those willing to share information to achieve a common goal, such as those involved in monitoring global changes in the environment. Although monitoring has been important in recognising these changes, it does not allow for local changes to be seen in a global context and to recognise how this information can be used to provide greater depth and breadth to the overall situation. One vision for collaborative environmental science has been based on the emerging Semantic Web which supports interaction among scientists, decision makers and stakeholders (Berners-Lee, Hendler, & Lassila, 2001). As Pike, et al. (2005) noted the goal of this infrastructure was not to replace established forms of collaboration, but 'to augment them with deeper interaction and with consensus-building techniques that bring advantages not available with traditional modes of communication' (p. 10).

In order for this infrastructure to be successful Pike, et al. (2005) believed that it must be designed around three characteristics of effective scientific collaboration. These include continuity to enable communities to link local studies to larger problems. The most efficient way for trends to be detected, both regionally and globally, has been to ensure that all information is available, and this needs to be a continual process. The ability to overcome social and political barriers can enable a more informal approach,

which in turn will give a greater number of diverse groups a role within the collaborative process. The research process and decision making must be open to anyone who can make an important contribution, and consequently, could include scientists, students, policymakers, and private citizens (Pike, et al., 2005, p. 10). The last characteristic is ubiquity, which has been exemplified in Internet connectivity. As the rate of Internet connectivity increases, research and community decision making communities no longer need to be isolated geographically. Technology has allowed almost constant, informal communication for researchers in the field through hand held devices; and has also provided, through constant Internet access, the general public and institutions such as schools, universities, government agencies and public libraries ubiquity through communication.

The term *collaboratories* has been used to describe efforts to enable geographically dispersed groups to have access to numerous data repositories, in order to provide resources in virtual instead of physical space. One example of a prototype collaboratory has been the Human Environment Regional Observatory project, also known as HERO. This joint effort between the University of Arizona, Clark University in Massachusetts, Kansas State University, and Penn State, supports local environmental change research. The HERO collaboratory provides a number of methods to support particular kinds of collaboration. These three methods, meet the effective scientific collaborative requirements of continuity, informality and ubiquity. They are: real-time conferencing, asynchronous discussions and data and knowledge sharing portals (Pike et al., 2005, p. 10). An important aspect of real-time conferencing is that data streams can also be transmitted, in addition to audio and visual signals. This means that participants can broadcast any application on their computer to other participants in a conference, and also gives the participants the ability to share the applications on each other's computer desktops. Another advantage of this desk-top sharing has been the manipulation of multiple computers by multiple users.

Asynchronous discussions are useful when collaboration needs more time, such as, when participants may not be available at the same time due to different time zones, or when conflicting views or anti-social behaviour may stop the flow of the interaction. Pike, et.al (2005) recognised that asynchronous discussions in which

participants contributed at different times throughout the course of a day, week, or longer, reduced conflict and allowed greater time for reflection (p. 13). Data and knowledge sharing portals, developed to share large-scale data, were very important, particularly when measurement techniques and data can vary. The HERO collaboratory includes a Web portal that served as a modern day notebook. The portal's name is Codex and it documents each step in the investigation process, providing a seamless interface which appeared as if all of the information was stored on one computer. The function and useability of the Codex is described as follows:

Every resource that is available through Codex is stored as a “knowledge object.” A knowledge object can be anything that a researcher might use, such as a data set, a description of a location, a hypothesis, or an analysis tool; it contains information about the connections between an object and other resources, such as other people, other places, or other tools. On top of this architecture is a graphic interface that allows users to draw diagrams (called concept maps) depicting how multiple objects connect, thus explaining broader associations among data, tools, concepts, and more. An individual researcher can share resources in his or her workspace with others, and groups of researchers can maintain shared workspaces representing the resources they all use. Codex can search through linked sets of knowledge objects in users' workspaces and evaluate the differences among them. Also, because resources are time-stamped, the system can reconstruct the evolution of ideas and illustrate how they came to be accepted or rejected (Pike et al., 2005, p. 16).

The interactive and graphical nature of Codex allows information to be more accessible and comprehensible to a wider audience. The organisation and communication of thinking, as evidenced in this technology, allowed for the visible evidence of the collaborative process to be documented and time stamped. However, collaboration is not just the designing of a range of enabling technological tools. A committed and effective group are necessary, as is the members' willingness to openly share and respect one another's ideas. As Pike et al. (2005) revealed, the HERO experience showed that the technology to enable researchers to work on problems with desktop sharing created excitement because it allowed them to

compare findings, ask questions and share breakthroughs quickly (p. 18). The increased rate at which information can be shared and processed created an atmosphere akin to a face to face meeting with the added advantage of graphically being able to demonstrate illustrations, graphs, concept maps or other images, which can take much longer to verbalise.

Another technological innovation which is currently being developed is the eu-DOMAIN project. This project is associated with eleven partners from seven European countries. eu-DOMAIN is the development of a working example of the first structured ambient intelligence infrastructure available to all. This is a futuristic concept which will provide individuals with user-friendly and intelligent support through the use of ICTs. This will ultimately result in the replacement of desktop computers, with technological devices embedded in everyday objects and environments:

Rooms will be able to recognise and respond to the presence of a particular individual, and support them in an intelligent and unobtrusive way. Data will be collected with minimal human input required; users will spend less time entering and recording data and more time being intelligently informed by their environment (Cordis, 2004).

eu-DOMAIN has also used the semantic web in addition to decision support tools, location-based technologies and cutting edge communication. In terms of collaboration the project aims to ‘interconnect people, devices, buildings and information content in an open, flexible, intelligent network’ (Cordis, 2004). The eu-DOMAIN will enable users to access their ‘virtual profile’ wherever they need to work, which is also, to some extent, the aim of the collaboratories proposed in the HERO project. The website stated that the eu-DOMAIN project will allow content providers to offer advanced ‘augmented reality’ services to users, creating new ways of collaborative working. The word collaboration in this case has been used to describe an intelligence service, that is allowing more open access to a range of technologies and information, which aim to benefit the individual rather than the group by analysing a person’s individual needs.

This emphasis on the analysis of information has been in direct contrast to the dotcom boom of the 1990s, which connected suppliers and customers with a way to exchange information electronically, rather than analysing the information being exchanged. This was due to a lack of understanding regarding the parameters and possibilities of the new technology; particularly in terms of how it could be used most effectively to exchange, analyse, and contribute to bodies of information. The HERO concept has been probably the closest to what could be considered ‘electronic’ collaboration, in that information is available to all interested parties and there is a transparent documentation of the process; however, the scale of the project necessarily means that each person cannot be intimately concerned with the personal needs of the others in the process. Also, there has been the potential for the ownership and authorship of particular outcomes to be taken and attributed, without permission by an individual. The advent of technology has been of great benefit to the collaborative process, however to work effectively it would need to be considered on a smaller scale and with people who have already established both a solid relationship, and were confident with the types of technology they will be using.

Information Technology (IT) has increasingly been used to facilitate what its creators describe as a ‘collaborative manner’. According to Dominguez (2006) a ‘wiki’ is a web page that allowed users to create and modify its contents in a collaborative way: ‘The users work on the same piece, so their contributions are reflected in a text which is continually being transformed’ (Dominguez, 2006). Dominguez described how ‘wikis’ were a useful tool for audience collaboration and cited some examples of the ways traditional media have sought to use them. For example, in June 2005 the Los Angeles Times announced that members of the public would be able to rewrite the editorials. As Dominguez noted: ‘Wikitorials lasted just three ephemeral and controversial days, in which the users burned up their fingers typing insults, which overwhelmed the newspaper’s ability to moderate’ (2006).⁴ Another case involved an article written by Ryan Singel titled ‘Veni, Vidi, Wiki’ which was put it in a wiki so that users would be able to edit it:

⁴ The media are under a mandate to ensure they are able to verify their information; however editorials are often based on opinions which do not need to be documented.

The users started working. They added links, questioned statements, suggested new sources of information and one of them even interviewed an academic and included the quotes. The article swelled up to double its original size, until someone took the scissors to it and made it more palatable for publication. Singel believes the final article is more accurate and reflects better how wikis are used although the story is not told so well (Dominguez, 2006).

Dominguez argued that there was great potential within the Internet to facilitate collaborative processes. She also believed that this type of co-authoring collaboration dilutes the personality of the writer: 'it is always difficult to write something with personality when many people have had a hand in the writing' (2006). The collaborative process which Dominguez described was a short term, intensive process which neglected the durable and pervasive relationship used in the definition for this study. The relationship was between the exchange and editing of text, and the risks appeared to be more one-sided than shared.

Community

Projects which involve the community invariably relied on a diverse range of people to contribute their various skills to the overall process. Many of these highly successful projects, which provided benefit to the community, do contain varying degrees of the collaborative process. The organiser or project leader must understand the unique characteristics of the community the project has been created for, and this necessarily requires meetings with key members of the project team and the community involved. A prior link through previous contact between the organisers and the community does, to some extent, help in this process. Arts festivals and sporting events are probably the most common link with the community that many people would encounter.

The Collaborative Games (2001) described the detailed planning and negotiation involved in staging the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney. This study of the collaborative nature of the Sydney Olympics was conceived as part of a Victorian Government initiative. The main points which were identified through the study concerning the collaborative aspects of the Games were:

- The project management of the Games was unusually collaborative and innovative.
- This collaboration began early, even prior to the Bid, and itself was the result of earlier collaborative experience in industrial relations and human resource management that began in the mid to late 1980s.
- The collaborative/innovative climate contributed to innovative dispute/conflict resolution.

In addition, the collaborative/innovative approach resulted in: excellent training and on the job learning; new work organisation, especially in construction; new management methods; widespread commitment to the green/environmental objectives; low levels of occupational, health and safety problems; unusual employee flexibility; increased employee involvement and participation in decisions; and high levels of interpersonal trust and cooperation between union officials, Games agencies and private employers; between union officials and shop stewards; and between unions.

Although the above could be attributed to sound management methods, it does appear that the collaborative process contributed to much higher overall satisfaction between the employers and the employees. This was also emphasised in the experiences of the volunteers who numbered 60,000+. Although volunteers were recruited for financial reasons, their human capital needed to be managed carefully. The Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG) spent approximately \$50 million to run the volunteer program, which included the costs of recruitment, training, accreditation, acknowledgement, uniforms, feeding and transport. This created a community ownership of the Games which was evidenced in the response of the volunteers who ‘took ownership, decided the Games were theirs, [and] became advocates for the Games’ (Webb, 2001, p. 76).

The aim of the volunteer experience was to make it enjoyable and meaningful. There was an understanding that people volunteer for what are ultimately ‘selfish’ reasons, such as wanting to have a good time or wishing to supervise particular events because

they are of personal interest. David Brettell indicated that understanding the volunteers' internal motivation and allowing them to 'own' their experience was the most effective way to recruit them:

They can be motivated, driven internally, if we respect, value and appreciate them and they enjoy it. This involved feeling part of the team and being kept in touch. We might have stimulating videos etc in the training but the aim was that they walk out knowing what the expectations are; that they can meet them; they will be managed well; and trained well (Webb, 2001, p. 77).

Webb discussed the culture of collaboration which was evident at the Games and reinforced the characteristics which had been discussed previously for the collaboration to be successful. He recognised that collaboration can be compared to a good personal relationship which required each partner to have strong, yet flexible personal 'boundaries'. The ability to hear another person's point of view, yet argue for what you believe was right, as well as the ability to handle conflict, was also essential. Webb also revealed that at times compromise was the best solution, which meant setting aside the perceived short term goal for the long term goal. He also believed that nurturing this kind of culture, especially one which has to replace the type of culture where competition and adversarial attitudes are commonplace, takes particular skill:

What makes this collaboration easier, possible even, is a cluster of attitudes that are not, and should not be adopted automatically in relations between people or organisations. These include trust, openness and respect. Respect particularly, as this is the basis from which the others can grow and without which their development is hard work if not impossible. Respect grows with the growth of relationships. It is earned, not given. The respect for the union movement's sincerity in support of the Games began before the Bid. The mutual respect between collaborating companies similarly began years ago and grew with experience. The trust and respect between companies, SOCOG and union people involved in negotiating and implementing the IR [Industrial Relations] agreements

grew with the experience – and in this last example has continued through to the work on this study of the Collaborative Games (p. 178).

This claim can be reinforced by the evidence that all construction for the Games was completed one year before the opening, and was on budget. The transport system was able to be tested beforehand at all the venues, a situation which had never occurred at the previous Games sites in modern Olympic history. Each of the venues was also able to practice-test their events to ensure everything would run smoothly. Generally, it was agreed that the volunteers were better trained and resourced through the comprehensive volunteer program (Webb, p. 179). This was in marked contrast to the 2004 Olympic Games held in Athens, where it appeared that construction may not have been completed before the opening. Although there were a few issues that arose from the Sydney Olympics, they were mainly confined to clashes between the managerial cultures of SOCOG and OCA (Olympic Coordination Authority). Webb recognised that both organisations had different elements of the collaborative culture that he had described, and that tensions were always inherent when one style/culture was making a transition to another (p. 182).

An important aspect of this transition was to devolve authority down the hierarchy to the people on the front line:

Providing the team framework for collective decision-making at progressively lower levels increases participation and personal commitment of the workforce to achieving the organisation's goals. There is no doubt that devolving responsibility down the hierarchy contributed significantly to the morale and commitment that was so evident in the SOCOG staff we interviewed (Webb, p. 183).

The way collaboration had been identified in this example was through the good will and respect that was generated between the overall organising authority and the employees, including the volunteers. They had all worked towards hearing the accolade from J. A. Samarach when he announced that the Sydney Olympic Games were 'the best games ever' and then adding the phrase 'and your wonderful volunteers' (Webb, p. 77). Although many of the employees were not involved in the

initial planning stages of the bid, they were all generally aware of what an Olympics Games event was and wanted to make it as successful as possible. The impetus for this was pride in making Australia look as good as it could in the eyes of the world. Chris Christodoulou described the drive for success as initially about the fear of failure, but during the process this was superseded by wanting to be the best. Michael Knight summarised this as follows:

We expected that the public feeling around the time of the Bid would not be rekindled until the torch was in the Sydney area. We had the problem of seven years between these peaks. But the key figures, senior people in SOCOG, OCA, ORTA⁵ always wanted to achieve the best Games – always knew the spotlight of attention would be on the Games – knew they'd be judged by the nation favourably or critically. They knew this beforehand. Also this view was there in the unions and the workers. It was hardest to find at some levels of SOCOG where this had morphed into an arrogance over what they were doing versus an objective assessment and a fear that it wouldn't happen. The people I liked were those who had a constructive anxiety. Some – only a few – were paralysed by fear. Some were just 'confident' they would pull it off. Both these were not much use. The third group – most of the people involved – had this constructive anxiety – an awareness of the cost of failure and the benefits of success – were a little scared the whole time – ran a little scared the whole time. These were the most useful (Webb, pp. 179 - 180).

Because the collaborative process is an open form of dialogue, which becomes more visible than the thinking of an individual, there is invariably a public aspect to the process itself and/or any negotiated outcomes. An international event, such as the Olympic Games, was probably one of the most public outcomes to be considered, and as such there was an external pressure to do the best job possible. This awareness of the 'other' is also apparent in sporting teams, who have to contend with the threat of losing if they do not work efficiently together. The threat of the 'other' has encouraged competition and a striving to do better between schools, universities,

⁵ Olympic Roads and Transport Authority.

businesses and even families. However, working in a community environment which encouraged communication, responsibility and leadership created an atmosphere in which participants felt that they were working together and obtaining benefits from the interaction.

Education

Collaborative processes are being increasingly utilised in the education sector (Chalmers, 1992; Engestrom, 1994; Erickson, 1989; Henry, 1996; Littleton et al., 2004). Educators are encouraging students to work together and to use a range of learning styles in order to increase their relational skills. Sawyer (1997) noted that contemporary research in education ‘focuses on the benefits of collaborative, participatory learning, in which the students take an active role, in rich unstructured interactions with both the teachers and with other students’ (p. 197). Sawyer saw improvisation as a vital factor in this process. Baker-Sennett and Matusov (1997) noted that when educational opportunities for improvisation are blocked, children’s opportunities to learn and develop become limited. Baker-Sennett and Matusov also noted that improvisation benefited from experience, particularly when examining teaching effectiveness. Teachers who created improvisational environments underwent a ‘paradigm shift in their teaching philosophy that involve[d] relinquishing control of the educational process and re-viewing teaching and learning as a collaborative endeavour’ (p. 207). Traditional education has emphasised text-based learning and discouraged improvisation. It is now apparent that improvisational performance provides students ‘with opportunities to engage in sophisticated collaborative-solving processes’ and ‘also serves as a tool that revitalises the way we think about the relationships between teaching, learning and development’ (Baker-Sennett & Matusov, 1997, p. 210).

In the education sector, Malone (2005) described collaboration as shared planning, with administrators talking to each other daily, sharing information and making decisions through a collaborative process. Although Malone did not fully explain how the collaborative process worked, she did indicate that it was a shared process which reflected the change in education and business from a less hierarchical ‘top down’ approach to a more devolved horizontal structure, with opportunities for decision making from those who were not in leadership positions. Friend and Cook (2003) in

the text *Interactions: Collaboration Skills for School Professionals* stated:

‘Interpersonal collaboration is a style for direct interaction between at least two coequal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision making as they work towards a common goal’ (p. 5). Friend and Cook contended that the use of the word style distinguished between the interpersonal experience of collaboration and the collaborative activity. They described the defining characteristics of collaboration in this context as follows: collaboration was voluntary; collaboration requires parity among participants; collaboration was based on mutual goals; collaboration depended on shared responsibility for participation and decision making; individuals who collaborated shared resources; and individuals who collaborate also shared accountability for outcomes (pp. 6 - 11). They further described the outcomes of a successful experience with the collaborative process as: individuals who collaborate valued this interpersonal style; professionals who collaborate trusted one another; and a sense of community evolved from collaboration (pp. 11 - 13). Although *Interactions* was written for teachers, there were many characteristics of collaboration described by Friend and Cook which had commonalities across other sectors. The emerging goals from successful collaborations were the valuing of interpersonal style, trust and a sense of community.

Collaborative School Management: One Principal’s Experience (1992) revealed how the collaborative process can operate with a leader in charge. Chalmers emphasised the importance of collaboration, but the process itself was not fully investigated. Henry (1996) in *Parent-School Collaboration: Feminist Organisational Structures and School Leadership* revealed more of the human element involved between the wider school community and staff which was facilitated by her awareness of feminine attributes in the collaborative process. She took a feminist approach to school leadership and structures which emphasised collaboration amongst parents, teachers and administrators as being essential to achieving effective outcomes for all concerned. Henry proposed that the organisational structures which schools are traditionally based upon require new leadership strategies, to enable them to work with the community instead of apart from it. Feminism, in addition to being a political movement that advocated for and gained legal and social rights for women, was also described as an intellectual school of thought grounded in principles of equality,

respect, and humanity. Henry believed this philosophical approach was vital in framing school-parent relationships.

As the majority of teachers will attest, in any sector of schooling there is an ever-increasing diversity of cultural, ethnic, language, social-class backgrounds and orientations amongst the school community. However, the language of parents and educators can be very different, resulting in communication problems. As Henry noted, the irony was that although educational jargon was not difficult, it can be used in such a way as to alienate and exclude people, automatically sabotaging any attempts to communicate effectively. Because of this perceived superiority, many parents may defer to a teacher, even when they have an important contribution to make (p. 147). Educators, teachers and administrators should be able to communicate easily with a wide range of people, particularly if they are sincere in sharing decision making.

Henry outlined and compared traditional bureaucratic hierarchical structures of organisational and school leadership, to feminist structures. She described this as a feminist mindset that was not competitive, bureaucratic, hierarchical nor exploitative, and further added that schools reflected the values of the society they exist in. She noted that the values that can be used from feminism would involve moving beyond gender differences and towards a theory of care that is inclusive:

In other words, education is no longer seen narrowly as a set of managerial and pedagogical skills, but rather as a caring, collaborative profession which works with families and others to make decisions about pedagogy and curricula in order to best meet the needs of all children. Following this view, schools would be child-centred, collegial cultures, operating as small units, where risk-taking and creative ideas and actions are valued. Parents and educators would be working together for such goals as: building trust; creating a safe school environment for children; enabling academic, athletic, and personal successes; supporting teamwork and collaboration between school and community; and taking care of building and finances. Hierarchy would be something to overcome. In a feminist view of organisation, face to face discussions and collaborative

decision making take precedence over bureaucracy and formal rules (p. 179).

This linkage between collaboration and feminine attributes has also been acknowledged throughout a variety of other education and leadership texts (Barrentine, 1993b; Buzzanell, 1994, 2000; Coughlin et al., 2005; Henry, 1996; Mumby, 1996; Reinhartz, 1992).

Collaboration in education therefore can be treated as both a learning and teaching strategy, which empowers both students and teachers to work together to achieve a supportive and nurturing environment. Henry stated that collaboration was built on cooperation, group effort, and a sense of belonging to a caring community. She believed that such an approach has been displaced in many of our institutions, including schools (1996, p. 133). This is one reason why many parents and students prefer smaller schools, as they feel the communication process is much clearer and the staffs have the opportunity to know students more intimately, than perhaps they would be able to in a larger school. Schools are also recognising the fact that they are a part of a wider community, not an exclusive entity within it. Through the valuing and recognition of students' backgrounds, schools are able to provide a more relevant and diverse curricula which will help prepare students more effectively. Historically, teachers, principals, staff, and parents have had very little power to change the larger organisational structures operating within schools. However Henry believes that:

The time is right for a shift to organisational structures and leadership that works against racism, sexism and classism, and truly puts students and their needs at the centre of the educational conversation. People have a right to be involved in schools, and they also have a responsibility. Opening up the schools to parents and others means that we all have to be prepared to invest more fully in our schools. Schools cannot do it alone. The future of our children depends on the commitment of society's leaders to educate and bring up young people to be socially responsible (1996, p. 193).

The notion of co-operative learning, which many also describe as collaborative learning, has evolved predominately from the theories of Vygotsky. He defined ‘the zone of proximal development’ a concept which described the distance between what a person can achieve as an individual, compared to what they can achieve if under the guidance of more capable peers. In educational environments for example, teachers who wish to maximise what a child can accomplish will minimise the time the child works alone on school tasks, and maximise the time they can work with others who possess different knowledge or expertise. Vygotsky and Piaget both claimed that cooperative learning is the essential means by which the mind constructs knowledge and invents meaning (Thousand et al., 1994). Educationalists have recognised a number of strategies which they say feature collaborative processes such as peer tutoring and cooperative learning groups, which helped students, learn more effectively. These types of self-described collaborative strategies have been extended into such areas as business, nursing, counselling, and leadership because of their intrinsic value to the learning process.

Cross-sector Collaboration

The recognition of the value of collaborative strategies has resulted in research into cross-sector collaboration. In November, 2006, the Council for Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS) released a report titled *Collaborating across the sectors*, (Gardner, Metcalfe, Pisarski, & Riedlinger). CHASS was established in 2004 as a peak representative body for the humanities, arts and social sciences sector. In December 2005, CHASS was commissioned by the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) to undertake this research project. The authors investigated the relationships between the humanities, arts and social sciences (HASS), and science, technology, engineering and medicine (STEM) sectors. The impetus of the report was that the changes of the twenty-first century, described as scientific, technological, economic, environmental and social, were too complex and too rapid for traditional sectors to operate in isolation. The report discussed: the current collaborative environment; the costs and benefits of collaborating; incentives and impediments to collaboration; and importantly in the context of this study, the key ingredients which contribute to successful collaboration. These key factors were described as follows:

- *Structure and team management* that provide an opportunity for all team members to contribute, with clearly defined roles and a well-structured research plan involving end users;
- *Power distribution* that encourages team members to participate, and a flat management structure that offers scope for the team to take risks and experiment with new approaches;
- *Resources and support* that include specific funding for cross-sectoral collaboration, and infrastructure that recognises the degree of personal interaction required to make the collaboration work;
- *Understanding of commonalities and differences* that encourage team members to establish shared goals in an environment where different approaches and cultures are understood and appreciated;
- *Communication* that is open, with clear processes to guarantee networking opportunities for sharing ideas and discussing problems;
- *Personal traits of team members* that make them suitable for collaboration, such as experience in collaboration, a willingness to build trust and understanding between team members, and enthusiastic champions or leaders;
- *Status and recognition* through publication, promotions and publicity for individual and team achievements; and support and promotion by funding bodies, universities and other institutions so that the value and outcomes of the collaboration are recognised.

There were five recommendations of the report which included the importance of promoting a new mindset by providing incentives and opportunities for increased cross-sectoral work; changing research behaviour by making cross-sectoral research a priority for funding bodies; educating for greater collaboration by encouraging disciplines and sectors ‘to think outside the box’ without risk to career development; the training of ‘boundary spanners’⁶ through programs in communication, team management and the different approaches of different disciplines; and coordinating and advocating cross-sectoral collaboration by showcasing successful examples of collaboration.

⁶ People who can communicate across sectors.

The researchers used a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Data was gathered through surveys, focus groups, workshops and structured interviews. Two of the web-based surveys used were, as Gardner et al. (2006) admitted, not truly representative of cross-sectoral collaboration in Australia. The authors were also aware that time and resource constraints limited the degree and depth of critical data analysis that could be carried out. The report recognised that ‘in a highly competitive international environment creativity needs to be usable with a country’s innovation system’ (p. 14). The most exciting developments in the arts, they noted, were the use of multimedia and cybertechnology in genuine collaborations between the sectors, which in some cases has resulted in an emerging field.⁷

This section has briefly considered how the collaborative process has been described and operates in some sectors of the arts, education, management, technology and the community. A consistent list of key characteristics has surfaced in each of these areas. In varying ways each of the sectors referred to trust, commitment, compassion, communication, genuine care and concern, negotiation, the ability to resolve conflict and to work towards a common goal as characteristics of the collaborative process. Recent literature indicated that there was a move away from traditional patriarchal models of organisation and communication towards more awareness of the value of treating groups as individuals with needs and concerns, who when given the opportunity to embrace and support an overall goal can achieve more than the individual.

⁷ The Suburban Communities project aims to develop tools to help households, community groups and neighbourhoods use information and communication technologies to design better community spaces in urban areas. The project is supported by the Spatial Information Architecture Laboratory based at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. The laboratory is a transdisciplinary education and research centre that brings together artists, architects, designers, composers, computer scientists, geospatial scientists, performers, social theorists and philosophers to research strategies for viewing and managing information. For more information visit: <http://www.sial.rmit.edu.au>. Artists and scientists at Symbiotica—a research laboratory located in the School of Anatomy and Human Biology at the University of Western Australia—are working together to explore scientific and technical knowledge from an artistic and humanistic perspective. Immersed in the laboratory environment, artists are dealing with bioengineering and its controversial ethical implications from a position of knowledge. Both the artists and the scientists gain insights into the ethics and community understanding of the science and the art. For more information visit: <http://www.symbiotica.uwa.edu.au/> (Gardner, et al., 2006, pp. 14, 18.)

Group Dynamics

In order to study and understand the collaborative process, it became necessary to examine group dynamics and leadership theory. Gibson and Hodgetts in *Organizational Communication* (1991) proposed that groups move through various stages of development, and as they move through these developmental stages members often change their expectations and behaviours. The authors defined these stages as: forming – group members discover interpersonal behaviours that are both acceptable and unacceptable to other members of the group; storming – individual members create a special place for themselves in the group; norming – the development of group cohesion and unity of purpose; and performing – the members of the group agree on each other's role. Based on the material derived from the literature review, it could be argued, that the major emphasis inherent to successful collaborative practice were the norming and performing stages. Gibson and Hodgetts (1991) appear to have derived these stages from Tuckman (1965) who used the same named stages, but divided these into team behaviour and team leader actions.

Team Stage	Team Behaviour	Team Leader Activities
Forming	Polite, impersonal, formal, watchful, guarded	Getting people talking, introducing each other, giving purpose to the group
Storming	Resisting involvement, arguing, opting out, feeling stuck	Resolving conflicts openly, permitting differences, involving everyone, supporting individuals
Norming	Getting organised, working together, setting ground rules and procedures	Focussing group effort, giving feedback and encouragement, developing skills
Performing	Reaching decisions, producing results, working closely and supportively, being resourceful and creative	Giving support and encouragement, steering the group, reviewing progress, challenging the results, feeding in new ideas, standing back

Table 8: Tuckman's four stages of teamwork (1965)

There were numerous organisational texts which utilised the forming, storming, norming and performing stages to describe a group's development. As is evident from the above table, enabling a group to reach the performing stage requires a skilful leader. McSweeney and Alexander (1996) stated the importance of leaders modelling the behaviour they wish the participants to emulate, particularly if they are working with volunteers:

The team leader has to create the working atmosphere for the team by demonstrating support for all the members, valuing all contributions and showing trust. These modelled behaviours encourage team members to do likewise. They are particularly important behaviours to demonstrate when volunteers are working in mixed groups with paid professionals.

Volunteers need to be given the opportunity to develop the skills they have in this setting and to share their perspectives (p. 82).

Gibson and Hodgetts (1991) have also described groups as being either formal or informal. Formal groups are usually created by the organisation itself, whereas informal groups are created by the personnel themselves, and are often the basis of communities of practice. The communication flow differs in both of these groups. Formal groups utilised a hierarchical, downward flow from superior to subordinate and an upward flow to convey requests for clarification and support as well as to convey information regarding progress. Horizontal communication was also used by groups at the same level of the hierarchical structure. Informal groups use upward, downward, horizontal and diagonal flows of communication, which helps to circumvent formal channels and save time (Gibson & Hodgetts, 1991, pp. 141 - 174). Another important difference between formal and informal groups was that many informal groups are voluntary and this voluntary nature will affect relationships particularly, if hierarchical structures, which did not previously exist, are suddenly imposed on the group. An informal leader can emerge over time in an informal group, and they have a unique ability to help the group reach its goals. Hellriegel, Slocum and Woodman (1992) have recognised that formal and informal leadership can also be distributed amongst multiple leaders, with one person demonstrating interpersonal skills in relations-oriented goals and another in the practicalities of task-oriented goals (p. 332). Formal and informal groups can both contain effective group leaders, who often assume a key role in the interactions between the group and external parties.

Stern & Hicks (2000) stated: 'Collaborative approaches provide an opportunity to build relationships, improve understanding, and create allies for future benefit' (p. 21). In many collaborative artistic practices these elements contribute to the overall political and aesthetic complexity, diversity and effectiveness of a project (Sholete, 1999). In terms of group work, Weeks (1994) described the traditional portrayal of

women as carers and effective communicators who strengthened individuals through the ‘social and emotional processes which they nurture’ (p. 153). As a form of leadership, Weeks noted that this had traditionally resulted in a silent, good-natured, but often invisible leadership, which puts the group first and differs from patriarchal, hierarchical organisations of power. However, Tannen (1998) cautioned against the over-generalisation of gender: ‘the forces of gender are far more complex than a simple male-female dichotomy suggests. Many variations exist, shaped by culture, geography, class, sexual orientation, and individual personality’ (p. 167). The complexities inherent in group dynamics and how these affect group stages were also important when investigating the collaborative process.

Group Work and Leadership

The elements of collaboration portrayed through these disciplines and sectors have also permeated leadership theory which has acknowledged that the age of the heroic, solo leader has been superseded by a facilitator who uses a collaborative approach in which many people are involved in solving complex problems (Bensimon, 1993; Buzzanell, 1994, 2000; Clabburn, 1995; Clift et al., 1995; DuBrin, 1997; Gibson & Hodgetts, 1989; Hellriegel et al., 1992; Irby, Brown, Duffy, & Trautman, 2002; Reed & Garvin, 1983; Rost, 1991; Shriberg et al., 1997). Bensimon and Neumann (1993) proposed the reasons for the evolution of this type of leader:

... as the world grows more complex ... it is likely that we will stop thinking of leadership as the property or quality of just one person. We will begin to think of it in its collective form: leadership as occurring among and through a group of people who think and act together (p. 12).

Traditional and hierarchical models of organisation, are not as responsive to events and actions in uncertain and dynamic times (Brown, 1991; Douglas, 2000; DuBrin, 1997; Garvin, 1997; Kayser, 1994; Montuori & Purser, 1999c). It was therefore necessary in the context of this study to investigate traditional group work texts. This enabled the opportunity to identify ways that groups such as organisations have perceived the value of group work, and could be compared to contemporary texts that advocate and foster group work practices. The processes of group work were described in a number of texts such as *Basic Groupwork*, (Douglas, 2000) *Group*

Work Practice (Toseland & Rivas, 1998), *Contemporary Group Work* (Garvin, 1997), and *Groups for Growth and Change* (Brown, 1991). These texts recounted how groups form, the dynamics operating in groups, leadership, how to plan groups, and the various stages of groups. Collaboration was rarely mentioned in such texts, which used terms such as co-operation, but on the rare occasions when it was, it was broadly described through factors such as taking responsibility for actions, bonding within the group, and internal change for both the participant and the organisation (Brown, 1991; Toseland & Rivas, 1998). Due to the rapid change of technology and communication systems, organisations have been transforming their structures and leadership strategies in order to better respond to change. The increasing rate and access to knowledge has subverted the traditional leadership model, in which power was situated at the apex of a triangular model.

Shriberg, Shriberg and Williamson (1997) described the key activity of the modern organisation as ‘to continuously learn and to master new knowledge in order to innovate, solve problems, and maintain productivity’ (p. 217). A number of recent leadership texts have also emphasised the important aspect of attributes such as compassion, caring and nurturing as a fundamental aspect of collaborative leadership (Acker, 1990; Adler, 1993; Buzzanell, 1994, 2000; Coughlin et al., 2005; Hargrove, 1998; Henry, 1996; Kline, 1993; Manning & Haddock, 1989; Montuori & Purser, 1995, 1999b, 1999c; Mumby, 1996; Purser & Montuori, 1999; Rosener, 1990). As Eisler (2005) noted:

Today’s management and organisational development literature proposes that, particularly in the postindustrial knowledge economy, a new leadership and management style based on respect, accountability, and empowerment is needed ... Such a leadership and management style models caring rather than coercion. Although some leaders – male and female – have always recognised the effectiveness of this leadership style, it is become more prevalent today because of the rising status of women, and thus of qualities and behaviours associated with femininity, such as nurturance and empathy (pp 24 - 25).

In *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century* (1991), Rost described a new form of leadership, which differed from the traditional hierarchical or industrial model, as the postindustrial paradigm of leadership. Rost described why the industrial paradigm of leadership is no longer adequate to explain both the realities of leadership we experience and the kind of leadership we need in a twenty-first century world. He cited the globalisation of the economy, the rapid and continual change resulting from new technologies, the information explosion and the increasing diversity of our population as issues that have engendered a sense of unpredictability and disorder. Therefore a style of leadership which encouraged communication in a diagonal and lateral way within the organisation, instead of the traditional vertical approach, was one which was necessary for growth and development. This type of learning was described by Magolda (1992) as ‘constructing meaning collaboratively with others’ (p. xviii).

Bryner and Markova (1996) took the ideas of Rost a little further by actually defining the elements of collaborative leadership. These characteristics included: being open to new ideas; allowing oneself to be moved by others’ opinions; creating new alternatives; redirecting aggressive action into mutual collaboration; sensing the intentions beneath actions; separating people from problems and issues; sensing a crisis before it had occurred; staying centred in core beliefs and making room for others; being at full power without interfering with others; leading interactions and extending relationships; and generating mutual win-win solutions (p. 205). This type of leadership, also known as the relational model, runs counter to the traditional model which was more self-oriented and hierarchical. (See Table 9):

Model 1: Collaborative (or Relational) Model	Model 2: Hierarchical (or Self-Oriented Model)
Designates new possibilities; shared understood goals; seeks creative, entrepreneurial results	Presides over status quo; pursues own agenda; seeks predictable results
Builds collaborative networks and new patterns of relationships and interactions; shows authenticity and vulnerability	Relies on traditional structures of organisation; view emotions as sign of weakness
Attitude of learning; is a specialist and generalist; equates success with questions	Acts like a “know-it-all”; is a specialist; equates success with knowing
Balances advocacy of views with inquiry into own and other’s thinking; listens to and deeply understands others	Passionately advocates views in order to win and discourages inquiry; listens as if “out to lunch” or reactively
Empowers others on job by acknowledging talents and gifts; provides an enabling environment	Controls others on job by diminishing their talents; takes care of others so they will submit.

Table 9: Collaborative Model vs. Hierarchical Model (Hargrove, 1998, p. 67)

Hargrove identified the key characteristics of collaboration as: sharing expertise and resources; establishing informal and social networks; being genuine and willing to learn; fairness; empathy and empowerment. The hierarchical model represented the type of vertical structure that many organisations have traditionally operated under. There is an obvious lack of affirmation, empowerment and sharing in this model. Hargrove acknowledged that nobody can operate in a collaborative mode all the time and proposed that with this awareness people can prevent themselves from missing opportunities and thereby maximise their own creative potential. It was evident however that leadership and successful and effective groups were symbiotic.

This section on group work and leadership revealed that traditional forms of leadership are incorporating more devolved leadership strategies. This recognition of multiple ways to communicate and delegate reflect changes in society and culture which seek to foster the creativity and innovation of team work.

Creativity and Collaboration

Montuori and Purser (1999b) in *Social Creativity* (Vol. 1) discussed creativity as being constrained by society and relationships; however, they noted that interactions, such as collaborations, amongst individuals in a larger system can also result in ‘emergent properties which could not be predicted through knowledge of the single individuals’ (p. 34).⁸ Montuori and Purser argued that research about creativity had stressed the constraints which were imposed on creative individuals and the creative process by society and relationships in general. They noted that the potential for creativity in processes, such as cooperation and collaboration, had been overlooked. Montuori and Purser also questioned whether social creativity in organisations might be part of a ‘divide and rule’ policy ‘designed to prevent creative and potentially destabilising collaborations among workers’ (1999b, pp. 34 - 35). Although they identified and discussed the social system which can affect a collaborative process, they did not discuss the qualities of relationships within collaboration.

⁸ Montuori and Purser are comparing the individualist view which is opposed to the systems view where the whole is more than the sum of its parts. Involvement in a system such as a research group, theatre group, etc., can open up possibilities for parts which the parts in and of themselves might not be able to have.

Texts such as *Reframing Organisations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership* (Bolman & Deal, 2003) emphasised the importance of creativity in areas, which had traditionally not considered both the needs of the organisation and the individual. Bolman & Deal (2003) encouraged the technique of ‘reframing’ in order to consider a variety of possibilities and a more creative approach in business:

Overemphasising the rational and technical sides of an organisation often contributes to decline or demise. Our counterbalance emphasises the importance of art in both management and leadership. Artistry is neither exact nor precise; the artist interprets experience, expressing it in forms that can be felt, understood, and appreciated. Art fosters emotion, subtlety, and ambiguity. An artist represents the world to give us a deeper understanding of what is and what might be. In modern organisations, quality, commitment and creativity are highly valued but often hard to find. They can be developed and encouraged by leaders or managers who embrace the expressive side of their work (pp. xvii - xviii).

Sundgren and Styre (2004) used the term ‘organisational creativity’ to describe both the creation of new products in a complex social system, and the extent, to which, organisations have instituted formal procedures and tools and encouraged meaningful behaviour (p. 240). They also noted that research on creativity does not consider organisational concerns. The systems theory approach, however, has provided an insight into the way creativity can be fostered within an organisation consisting of the individual, the field and the domain (Csikszentmihalyi, 1995). Research suggested that people were most creative when they are intrinsically motivated by the challenge of the work itself (Amabile, 1986; Sawyer, 2006). Maslow’s (1954) hierarchy of needs revealed that our behaviour has been motivated to fill needs in our lives. Basic needs must be met before higher-order needs can be attended to.⁹

Creativity, which is manifested during mental and personal growth, allows us to adapt to complex situations, such as being part of a collaborative process. Research on

⁹ They are: physical needs, safety and security, sense of belonging, self-esteem, and mental and personal growth.

creativity revealed that creative people are more comfortable with complexity and disorder, and therefore able to adapt more readily to changing circumstances:

Creativity means shaking things up, both inside ourselves and in the world around us, and constant re-organising of both cognitive schemata and, to a lesser extent, the domain of the creative person's activity ... Creative thought tends to make sense of phenomena that appear to be chaotic, and seeks to create a higher order simplicity – one that incorporates the complex, disorderly phenomena in a broader, more inclusive, more open perspective (Montuori, 2003, p. 239).

Ogilvy (1989) has argued that the emergence of postmodernism resulted from our lack of ability to overcome 'certain dualisms that are built into modern ways of knowing' (p. 9). This statement indicated that it was imperative to create and foster creative processes, such as collaboration, to enable people to deal with complexity. The direct link between creativity and collaboration as noted by the authors in this section allowed linkages to be made between group work practices and the arts sector.

Groups and Collaboration

White and O'Brien's (1999) *The Collaborative Decision Making Tool Kit* was written for educators, and provided a step by step guide to facilitate 'effective and genuinely collaborative meetings' (p. 6). The initial chapters examined the philosophical basis for collaborative decision making and the subsequent chapters provided twenty-eight detailed strategies to facilitate decision making. Although there were a number of texts devoted to planning successful meetings (Clift et al., 1995; McDermott, 2002; Toseland & Rivas, 1998), this text focussed on collaboration in the actual process of a meeting. The strategies were helpful in determining what characteristics could be encapsulated in a collaborative model which could be relevant for the arts. White and O'Brien defined the collaborative process as being 'a genuinely open system, [with] the sharing of knowledge and empowerment by the leader' (p. 11). Paradoxically using the term 'leader' in the context of collaboration seemed to contradict the sharing of responsibilities and resources described by the word collaboration. The authors qualified this by describing the leadership they advocated as 'a subtle form of leadership which makes professional activities and

decision making meaningful to others' (p. 18). This definition was particularly helpful when examining large collaborative groups which necessarily require some form of leadership, however subtle, to progress.

The text *Learning to Collaborate, Collaborating to Learn* (2004), was situated in an educational context, and examined how certain modes of peer collaboration promote learning, and how the skills, disposition and strategies to engage in a collaborative process can be learned in order to make peer interaction an opportunity for learning. This work was undertaken with students and teachers through observational tasks which were recorded and analysed. Some of the interesting observations proposed by this text were that the collaborative process can be affected by gender, with some of the studies revealing that girls were more successful at engaging in collaborative activities than boys. Another important observation was that collaborative activity was inherently creative, and as such this broadens the repertoire of experiences from which children can interpret the set task, and therefore the process and/or end result may not always be directed towards the educational goal that had been devised. The text also argued that each individual has a different capacity to collaborate; it was not an innate quality, which appears to refute the proposition that women may be more predisposed to collaboration. The last chapters of *Learning to Collaborate, Collaborating to Learn* argue that computer technology can re-structure social interaction and joint knowledge building, enabling us to approach the collaborative process without the traditional biases which already exist in verbal communication. Although this is an important point, it is not in the scope of this study to investigate it further.

As noted in the previous chapter, *Collaboration: What Makes It Work* (2nd ed.), (2004) was the most explicit text in defining factors related specifically to the collaborative process. Mattessich, Murray-Close, & Monsey identified these factors as: environment, membership characteristics, process and structure, communication, purpose and resources, and provided explanations for understanding each of these factors in terms of the collaborative process. To obtain these factors the authors searched through computer-based bibliographies, contacted researchers interested in the topic, and tracked down bibliographic references in each of the documents. After a screening process which involved comparing their definition of collaboration to the

way it was used in the studies, they eventually were left with eighteen studies from which they distilled twenty success factors necessary for an effective collaboration. The limitation of this study was that the bibliography related to the research was predominately in the areas of community, education and government. The arts areas were not considered or even referred to which appeared, it could be argued, to reinforce the traditional perception that the arts and collaboration are not effective partners.

How to Make Collaboration Work (Straus, 2002) introduced five principles for collaboration, which the author had successfully used and implemented in over thirty years of facilitating collaborative processes. Straus described these principles as: stakeholder involvement, consensus building, process design, facilitation and group memory. He also listed sixty-four heuristic strategies which were linked to the ability to solve problems, as he believed heuristic thinking tools increased creativity and productivity (p. 27). An important aspect of this text was Straus's recognition of the importance of relationships in the collaborative process. He defined this diagrammatically as results, processes and relationships, which interact with one another. Straus proposed that for a collaborative effort to be considered successful, participants must be satisfied with all three dimensions. Although Straus provided important factual knowledge such as the best way to organise meetings, and having clearly defined roles, he did not spend an equal amount of time describing the intrinsic link between collaboration and creativity. Straus, did however, acknowledge that hierarchical structures still existed and proposed that facilitative leadership was an important element in fostering collaboration in organisations:

It may seem that traditional hierarchies are long gone, given the large number of team-based organisations and virtual corporations in existence today. And it's true that many organisational structures today look more like spider webs or networks (with multiple reporting relationships) than simple hierarchies. But the underlying mental model in these organisations is still that of hierarchy, with final decision-making authority delegated to specific individuals. As a leader or manager in a hierarchical organisation, you can delegate a decision but you can't abdicate your ultimate responsibility or authority. But you can organise an

informal group to solve a problem collaboratively – using a consensus decision rule – as long as the fallback is that you, the formal decision maker, have the final say (p. 73).

Straus focussed on the leader as a supporter of collaborative action which involved seeking maximum appropriate involvement, designing pathways to action and facilitating agreement. The seven practices of the facilitative leader described by Straus are listed in Table 10:

Elements	Practices	Outcomes
Share an inspiring vision	Share vision and values to keeps the mission in the forefront	Guides people towards greater achievement
Focus on results, process and relationships	Build a framework for performance and satisfaction by balancing focus among results (performance), process (how the work is done) and relationships (how people treat each other)	Balancing these three dimensions of success enables leaders to produce results, sustain productivity and quality, and build a supportive work environment
Seek maximum appropriate involvement	Leverage interest and talent by including people appropriately in decision-making processes	Including people in these processes results in better communication, more informed decisions, increased commitment to action, and higher levels of trust
Design pathways to action	Guide others in planning how to solve problems and realise opportunities	Builds confidence that the goal is attainable and increase the likelihood of successful implementation
Facilitate agreement	Model behaviours that create a safe environment for participation and teamwork Encourage diversity of opinion and honour individual perspectives	Demonstrates the power of teamwork to produce clear decisions and quality results
Coach for performance	Encourage people to think outside the norm, experiment and take risks	Creates environments in which people learn and grow
Celebrate accomplishment	Seize the moment to celebrate small successes and acknowledge individuals	Encourages pride, self-esteem and a sense of commitment to the group or organisation

Table 10: Model of Facilitative Leadership (Straus, 2002)

The elements described by Straus: shared vision; maintenance of relationships, appropriate involvement; confidence in others' abilities; facilitating opportunities and encouraging participants share a number of similarities with models of collaboration described in both this and the previous chapter. It has been noted that skilled leadership,¹⁰ was essential for successful collaboration, and Straus's model of

¹⁰ See the section 'Group Work and Leadership' in this chapter.

facilitative leadership demonstrated how this could be achieved in an organisational context.

The *Collaboration Handbook* (Winer & Ray, 2000) acknowledged that collaboration can be an intense effort, and its complexities and ambiguities need to be embraced. The authors defined collaboration as: ‘a mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organisations to achieve results they are more likely to achieve together than alone’ (p. 24). Significantly, the authors described cooperation and coordination, as preceding steps before collaboration can be achieved, based on increasing intensity for building relationships and achieving the standard of work required. The importance of language and changing the way people work were also well described. They described the factors that can make or destroy a collaborative venture as: ideology, leadership, power, history, competition and resources. Winer & Ray acknowledged that individuals can be part of a collaboration, however if they wish to make an impact they must usually represent an organisation or community of some kind. The text also contained a number of forms, guides and checklists to help document what has occurred in a collaborative process, although these were written with organisations primarily in mind. In the latter half of the text the authors acknowledged the need to replace the myth of the rugged, independent individual with one of interdependence among people and organisations with different world views. To make changes in society, the authors stated that we need to understand the system we are working within, plan changes to the system and then begin to change the system. In this way: ‘... we go beyond collaboration as we know it and create a new myth. In this myth, individuals, organisations, and their separate actions merge to mobilise community-wide efforts and resources. In our new myth, when one part changes – the system changes’ (p. 129).

Winer and Ray explained that because systems thinking dealt with diverse people and structures simultaneously, it also uncovered the structural causes of behaviour. The *Collaboration Handbook* was the only text specifically written about collaboration, which explicitly defined this link. The authors acknowledged that integrating the principles of collaboration into systems change was innovative and had not been previously attempted before. They stated: ‘Understanding how structure influences behaviour allows everyone to see more clearly the powers to change the behaviour

and to adopt policies that affect the larger system' (p. 130). It was noted earlier in the chapter, that Csikzentmihalyi (1995) had proposed that social processes which operated in a social system determined what was creative. In social systems theory we can utilise Csikzentmihalyi's model to illustrate the social system artists are operating in:

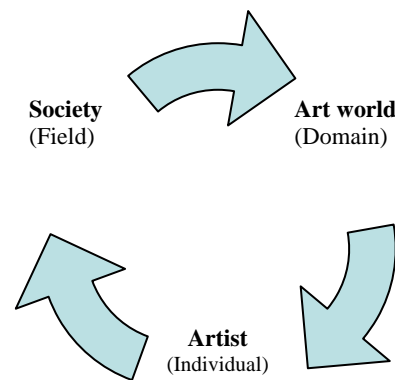


Figure 1: Social Systems Model of the Art world (Csikzentmihalyi, 1996)

Csikzentmihalyi (1996) highlighted the interaction of the individual, who uses information in a domain and transforms or extends it through their personal expression. The domain identified what cultural artefacts were supported and preserved. The field consists of people, such as art critics and gallery owners, who control and influence the domain. Understanding the structure and implications of this social system in the arts is necessary before innovation can commence. The limitation of the *Collaboration Handbook* was its case studies were restricted to industry and education. Creativity as an important factor was tacitly mentioned in the coaching for performance element, but was not expanded on in the text. Although the *Collaboration Handbook* did emphasise the complexity of collaboration, it failed to adequately acknowledge the importance of creativity and innovation inherent in the collaborative process. The elements and actions of working collaboratively were described in four stages in Table 11:

Stages	Actions
Envision Results by Working Individual-to-Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring People Together: have an initiator; choose potential members; invite participation; take time • Enhance Trust: choose a convenor; hold effective meetings; involve everyone in the meetings; disclose self-interests • Confirm Vision: understand vision statements; write a

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vision statement; capture the focus Specify Desired Results: define desired results; think strategically; take strategic action
Empower Ourselves by Working Individual-to-Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm Organisational Roles: document progress; obtain authority, secure commitment, clarify authority Resolve Conflicts: expect conflict; clarify issues; create a conflict resolution process; resolve the unresolvable Organise the Effort: form a structure; determine roles; decide staffing; secure resources Support the Members: establish a decision-making protocol; create a communication plan; reward members, reward other people
Ensure Success by Working Organisation-to-Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage the Work: review the vision and desired results; lay out an action plan; create accountability stands; build collaborative work habits Create Joint Systems: decide the degree of closeness; create and approve joint agreements; make needed organisational changes
Endow Continuity by Working Collaboration-to-Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create Visibility: convey an image; promote the results Involve the Community: teach the value of collaboration; bring diverse interests together; build leadership; hold public forms Change the System: understand the present system; plan changes in the system; begin to change the system End the Collaboration: understand the need for an ending; create ending rituals

Table 11: Four Stages of Collaboration (Adapted from Winer & Ray, 1994)

Organising Genius: The Secrets of Creative Collaboration (1997) by Warren Bennis and Patricia Biederman began with the premise that there are groups, and also ‘Great Groups’:

Groups become great only when everyone in them, leaders and members alike, is free to do his or her absolute best. This book is about organising gifted people in ways that allow them both to achieve great things and to experience the joy and personal transformation that such accomplishment brings. In today’s Darwinian economy, only organisations that find ways to tap the creativity of their members are likely to survive (p. xvi).

Bennis and Biederman chose six ‘Great Groups’¹¹ who were engaged in creative problem solving, and described the specific problems and solutions each one worked through. The authors believe that by studying exemplary situations such as these, we begin to understand how genius can be successfully combined to achieve results that enhance our lives. Bennis and Biederman also acknowledged that traditionally the leader has been glorified at the expense of the group; however Great Groups offered a new model in which the leader is an equal amongst others in the group. Their research has shown that psychologically and socially great groups are very different from ordinary ones. Great Groups are intrinsically motivated, have low morale problems, are grounded in their sense of talent and achievement, are collegial and non-hierarchical, and consist of singularly competent individuals who often have a non-authoritarian streak.

Organising Genius acknowledged that although women played roles in the Great Groups described, most of the participants were male, which the authors attributed to the lack of professional opportunities for women. However, they also inferred that although sexism kept women out of some of the Great Groups, ‘there may be something in the group dynamic itself that has discouraged participation by women’ (p. 15). This statement appears to contradict the evidence that women work well in groups (Barrentine, 1993a, 1993b; Fisher, 2005; Reed & Garvin, 1983; Rosener, 1990; Whiteley, 2005), and perhaps was due more to the majority of males in the group who may have dominated. Bennis and Biederman also added that this was an area for further research. This acknowledgment provided a general disclaimer for their lack of research into this particular aspect of group dynamics which seriously undermined the integrity of the aim of this book. The reason the authors gave for the exclusion of women, and other minorities was because of the adolescent subculture generated by the Great Groups. However, they did not examine social factors which have precluded women from belonging to groups because of social/cultural

¹¹ The six great groups chosen by Bennis and Biederman were made up of gifted people, and each was widely influential. The groups they chose were: the Walt Disney studio, which invented the animated feature film in 1937 with *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*; Xerox’s Palo Alto Research Centre (PARC) and Apple, which made computers easy to use and accessible to non-experts; the 1992 Clinton campaign, which put the first Democrat in the White House since Jimmy Carter; the elite corps of aeronautical engineers and fabricators who built radically new planes at Lockheed’s top-secret Skunk Works; the influential arts school and experimental community known as Black Mountain College; and the Manhattan Project which ushered in the nuclear age.

expectations; lack of training in the domain; and/or acknowledgement or encouragement from the field.

Bennis and Biederman described a qualitative change in the participants in which they were able to see more, achieve more, and have a better time in the Great Group than they did when working alone. The process itself was described as being exciting and even joyous. The authors summarised fifteen important similarities which they recognised across each of the groups. Table 12 below was adapted from Bennis and Biederman's findings:

Characteristics of Great Groups	How to maximise the potential of a Great Group
Greatness starts with superb people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruiting the most talented people possible
Great Groups and great leaders create each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leader of a Great Group has to invent a leadership style that suits it • Leaders have to make decisions without limiting the perceived autonomy of the other participants
Every Great Group has a strong leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leader of a Great Group has the ability to recognise excellence in others and their work • Everyone must have complete faith in the leader's instincts and integrity
The leaders of Great Groups love talent and know where to find it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of a group reflects the network of its leader • There is a profound impact on participants in a Great Group as inclusion is a mark of their excellence
Great Groups are full of talented people who can work together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Groups are more tolerant of personal idiosyncrasies than are ordinary ones, due to intense focus on the work itself
Great Groups think they are on a mission from God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants in Great Groups know that they will be expected to make sacrifices, but believe it is worthwhile • A clear, collective purpose makes every task in the Great Group seem meaningful and valuable
Every Great Group is an island – but an island with a bridge to the mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who are trying to change the world need to be isolated from it, yet still be able to tap its resources • Great groups create a culture of their own
Great Groups see themselves as winning underdogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Groups have a gleeful energy which stems from their view of themselves as feisty and untraditional
Great Groups always have an enemy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An enemy (real or imagined) helps the group to rally and define itself
People in Great Groups are intense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Groups are not distracted by peripheral concerns, their passion is the task at hand • Great Groups trade the pleasures of a normal life for the thrill of discovery
Great Groups are optimistic, not realistic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great things are accomplished by talented people who believe they will accomplish them • People in Great Groups are simultaneously analytical and confident

In Great Groups the right person has the right job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truly gifted people are not interchangeable • When the person and task are properly matched, the work can proceed with passion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leaders of Great Groups give them what they need and free them from the rest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Great Groups share information effectively • Great Groups need protection because they are more susceptible to being misunderstood, resented, even feared • Successful leaders find ways to insulate people from bureaucratic meddling • Leaders of Great Groups keep the stress in check • Leaders of Great Groups trade the illusion of control for the higher satisfactions of orchestrating extraordinary achievement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Groups are focussed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Groups are hands on • The task brings the group together and keeps it grounded and focussed • Great curiosity and problem-solving ability are not enough, there must also be continuous focus until the task is completed
Great work is its own reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Groups are engaged in solving hard, meaningful problems • The reward is the creative process itself

Table 12: Maximising the potential of Great Groups (Adapted from Bennis and Biederman, 1997)

A number of the characteristics of Great Groups were similar to those in *Collaborative Circles* (Farrell, 2001). Both of these texts, in addition to *Creative Collaboration* (John-Steiner, 2000), emphasised the emotional underpinning and importance of creativity necessary for successful collaborations.

Recent recognition of informal communication channels and how they have enhanced organisational structures, such as businesses and communities has also become more prevalent. This acknowledgment has revealed the increasing importance being paid to cooperative and collaborative processes in our lives. Dr Etienne Wenger's 'Community of Practice' (CoP) theory sought to examine organisations and the informal structures or communities, which arise spontaneously within them. Globally, Wenger has been recognised as a leader in the field of learning theory and its application to the business community. He was a pioneer of communities of practice research and co-authored *Cultivating Communities of Practice* (2002). Based on social theories of learning, communities of practice draws heavily on the work of Vygotsky. Wenger described communities of practice as being created according to people's own interests, and are usually found outside of hierarchical organisations.

The authors of the text *Cultivating Communities of Practice* (Wenger et al., 2002) defined the term as follows: ‘Groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their understanding and knowledge of this area by interacting on an ongoing basis’ (p. 4). Saint-Onge and Wallace (2003) in *Leveraging Communities of Practice for Strategic Advantage* revealed, that successful organisations have recognised that a strong link between individual and organisational capabilities provided strategic advantages. They noted that the overall blueprint for today’s organisations had been inherited from the industrial era, ‘leaving organisations ill equipped to manage their intangible assets’ (p. 9). Organisations began to observe that employees were forming informal groups to solve work-related problems, and recognised that high levels of collaborative learning were taking place resulting in innovative solutions. However, as Saint-Onge and Wallace stated ‘the structure of an organisation can have a key role to play in either restricting or fostering the collaboration and learning that flow from exchanging knowledge’ (p. 5). The paradox has been that communities of practice are voluntary, organic and relatively safe, neutral spaces which were not answerable to a management structure. The interest by organisations in their communities of practice can enhance or destroy them. As Wenger et al., (2002) stated: ‘Because communities of practice are living things, they require an approach to organisation design that more fully acknowledges the importance of passion, relationships, and voluntary activities in organisations. (p. 64). Saint-Onge and Wallace identified the common characteristics of communities of practice as follows:

Common Characteristics	Description
Utilise productive inquiry	Participants have found that by asking questions in the community, the responses are situated in experience and directly related to the realities of work.
Self-manage through a governance structure	Communities of Practice have purpose and direction and a way to self-organise to meet their goals.
Generate knowledge	New knowledge is created by the community that forms the content of their practice. This occurs through productive inquiry, access to internal and external information and contributions of participants.
Self-govern	Participants govern the community through guidelines that have been developed through consensus within the community, not imposed by the organisation.
Assume accountability	The community of practice exists as a resource for its members. Within this context, each member assumes the responsibility to support fellow members as required.
Collaborate	Communities of practice use a variety of collaborative tools, including

	technology, to enable face-to-face meetings to occur.
Receive support	Organisational support may not be directly given or accepted by a community of practice, but there exists within the organisation an acknowledgment of the social nature of learning and the benefits of providing opportunities for employees to collaborate and learn.

Table 13: Common Characteristics of Communities of Practice (Saint-Onge & Wallace, 2003)

From these characteristics, it is evident that the core of a community of practice was also the basis for the collaborative circles as described by Farrell (2001), and indeed the initial beginning of any collaborative group. Collaborative groups have their own culture as do organisations. Saint-Onge and Wallace described culture in this context as ‘the most difficult element of organisational capability to enhance and move dynamically’ (p. 5). This can be likened to the art world which also seeks to preserve tradition, and imposes strict criteria, on what can be deemed to be acceptable to its domain. Although the term communities of practice has recently been adopted by organisations, they have existed for as long as informal groups have met to exchange ideas and information. What is interesting to note was the value that organisations were placing on processes such as collaboration, which is an inherent element of these groups.

Barrentine (1993a) described the need to connect at a deeper level, to have more authentic relationships and clear communication, as a motivating force for most women. In terms of organisations she described this new way of connecting with friends, family or co-workers as a community, which had ‘implications for continuity, lasting connection, and deep purpose’ (p. 17). Wilson described her experience of female leadership as one of nurturing and sharing and stated that: ‘We read all the time how traditional ‘female’ qualities, such as working as a team and horizontal leadership, are being appreciated in the corporate world’ (Symons, 2006). Wenger (2002) contrasted communities of practice with organisations which traditionally focused on creating structures, systems, and roles that achieved relatively fixed organisational goals. Wenger also found that as communities of practice developed, they were built on pre-existing personal networks, and continually reflected on and redesigned themselves throughout their existence. Information from outside the community of practice was used to create a dialogue about what the community could achieve, and the people who understood the issues inside the community were able to see new possibilities and act as change agents.

Wenger used a metaphor which was discussed previously in the section on music as ‘striking a groove’ to describe a vital community of practice:

Although there are different rhythms for different people, most of our lives do have a rhythm, which contributes to its sense of familiarity ... There is no right beat for all communities, and the beat is likely to change as the community evolves. But finding the right rhythm at each stage is key to a community’s development (pp 62 - 63).

An important underpinning of communities of practice has been autonomy and shared vision. As Bonk, Wisher, & Nigrelli (2004) stated: ‘If the community of practice is predesigned or manufactured by managers or administrators, it runs the risk of being ineffective or even failing’ (p. 204). This warning can also apply to collaborative practices. Saint-Onge and Wallace (2003) acknowledged that effective collaboration was difficult to achieve when ‘turf protection’ had been common practice in many businesses. However they noted that:

Communities of practice offer a solution to this problem. Successful collaboration requires the development of new capabilities – of skills, mindsets, organisational processes and tools. And communities of practice are perfect structures to help organisations flex these muscles because communities are based on collaboration across functional areas. With the knowledge-driven business environment imposing the need for an unprecedented level of partnership through networks, the capability to collaborate in order to create integrated solutions can create significant value in an organisation (p. 63).

Saint-Onge and Wallace (2003) also provided a ‘toolkit’ of ideas to help foster communities of practice and suggested a developmental cycle for communities of practice where they become a complementary structure to the traditional accountability hierarchy. They proposed that as networks of communities emerge as an integral structure, organisations will keep an accountability ‘spine’ that will be flatter and more empowering:

The combination of the two structures adds up to an entirely new form of organisational design, one that takes advantage of the complementary strength of both approaches. They co-exist in support of one another, building-in a level of coherence and resilience that would be unattainable by either structure on its own (pp 318 - 319).

Straus (2002) proposed that collaborative organisations also have to be learning organisations. To enable this, he recommended that technology should be used to support the sharing of knowledge and best practices across both organisations. Straus noted that the field of knowledge management had recently increased dramatically as companies realised the competitive advantage of relaying information about best practice to all employees. Traditionally this information would have been the exclusive domain of the top leadership team. He stated:

Virtual communities of practice – networks of employees with similar interests who share information, build community, and learn together regardless of their geographic location or job position – are being encouraged and supported by groupware technology. While technology alone isn't enough to foster learning, it can play an important role in supporting the process of externalising, documenting, transferring and applying knowledge through an organisation (p. 173).

Technology plays an integral role in the structure and support of communities. This was particularly evident in groups which were geographically dispersed, enabling access to emails and websites in addition to providing the technology to attend meetings through videoconferencing. Due to its flexibility, cost-effectiveness and convenience, technology facilitates the collaborative process when participants are unable to meet face to face.

This section discussed groups which have employed collaborative processes and the characteristics required for this to occur. An emphasis on creativity and the importance of social dynamics were a consistent feature of these groups. The

increased interest of organisations in collaboration as an asset to innovation was also a revealing aspect of the groups studied.

Collaborative Models in the Arts

The data collected from a range of sectors, suggested particular elements which were required to implement and sustain a successful collaborative process. The creation of a collaborative model, which could be utilised in the arts, necessitated a search for collaborative models in other sectors to determine common characteristics which would be relevant for an arts model. In terms of this study it has been difficult to find a collaborative model written specifically for the arts sectors. There were a number of texts which took a pragmatic approach to the collaborative process with suggested proformas to facilitate the process. The proformas covered areas such as: a membership roster to list all of the organisations involved and their representatives; meeting agendas which detailed the purpose of the meetings, an action agenda and role responsibilities; vision and focus statements to achieve support from key stakeholders; desired results and strategies in which stakeholders are rated on their support or lack of support; conflict resolution forms to show that progress has been made, and to revisit resolutions in case similar issues arise; graphical interpretations of collaborative structures and levels of authority to help people determine which one they are operating in; decision-making protocols; action implementation plans; joint agreements; evaluation procedures; checklists for change; promotional plans; succession planning; a guide to systems change; and ending rituals (Mattessich et al., 2004; White & O'Brien, 1999; Winer & Ray, 2000). These types of proformas were written for the organisation and business sector and revealed the importance of carefully considering the vagaries of human behaviour.

Although a model of collaboration seems antithetical to creative practice, the fact that the collaborative process itself has been inextricably linked to both creativity and society reveals that a model which could contribute to collaborative arts practice is a viable outcome of this study. Graphical models of collaboration were more easily found in areas such as leadership, management and information technology. In conjunction with these models it was also important to consider models of creativity which could be integrated within existing collaborative models to help inform the model for this research.

Lenten, Darby, Miller, & Sibbel (1981) defined a model as ‘an idealised construct that isolates and represents, frequently in graphic form, the key components in a system or process so that the various parts, and the parts to the whole, can be examined’ (p. 9). A model, however, can be necessarily adapted to the particular situation for which it was being used. Bassett (1969) proposed that a model was ‘not intended to state what *should* be done. But it can, if it is a good model, suggest what might be done ... It should be more like a map that permits a journey [rather] than a route which is a prescribed path’ (p. 17) [Emphasis in original]. Lenten et al., (1981) further stated that ‘a good model will help us to get where we want to go as directly as possible, without the inconvenience of false starts or dead-ends’ (p. 11). Bolman and Deal (2003) described how understanding a model for group dynamics could avoid future problems: ‘Groups, like modern art, are complex and subtle. A few basic dimensions can offer a map for bridging clarity and order out of apparent chaos and confusion’ (p. 173).

Charles Green (2004) described two models of collaboration which he revealed were based on ownership, rather than production:

The first is the popularly held view of collaboration as reconciliation, implying both profit and loss. This book-keeping sense of the word sees artistic collaboration as a balance. A deficit in one part of the relationship is compensated by a surplus somewhere else – a partnership or a cooperative to which individuals bring something that can also be taken away. In the second model of artistic collaboration, the parts of the relationship merge to form something else, in which the whole is more than the sum of the parts. The parts are not removable or replaceable because they do not combine, as much as change. The collaboration itself exists as a distinct and distinctive entity. Collaboration, in specific cases like the one I describe is an act of disappearance, born not out of a desire to break through the limitations of the self but from a desire to neutralise the self in order to clear working space (p. 596).

Both of these models were also described by John-Steiner (2000) in *Creative Collaboration*. She labelled them complementary and integrative models of collaboration. John-Steiner (2000) described complementary collaboration as one in which participants complement one another with differences in training, skill and temperament to support a joint outcome through the shared division of labour (p. 70). This type of collaboration has been recommended for arts practitioners working in small groups of eight to ten people. Integrative collaboration was less common than complementary collaboration due to the intimate relationship between the participants. John-Steiner (2000) described integrative collaboration as one in which the participants, frequently suspended their differences in style. The outcome of the work transformed both the field and the participants, and an intense bonding occurred between the participants. The work became another entity, sometimes described as ‘the third artist.’ The intensity and passion of this collaboration, it could be argued, only worked between two people, as it was difficult to share this level of fusion. The integrated form was most commonly found between people in an intimate relationship, and/or collaborators who had already established a prior relationship, particularly during their formative years in arts training and is illustrated in Figure 2:

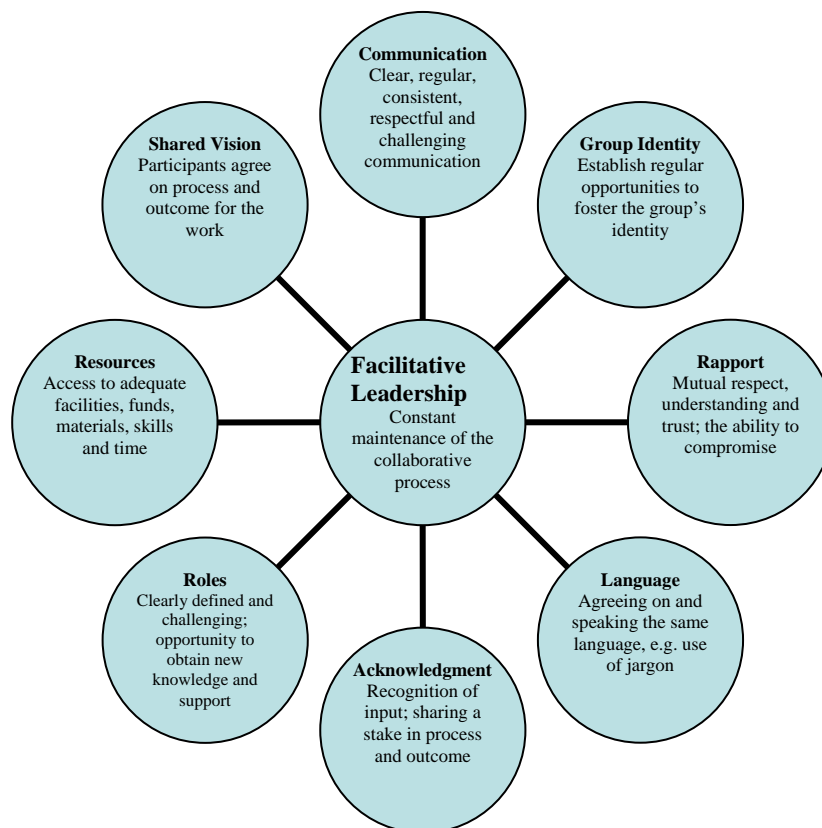


Figure 2: Complementary Model for Collaboration (Adapted from John-Steiner, 2000)

Core Elements of Complementary and Integrative Models for Collaboration

Within both the complementary and integrative model for collaboration, there were a number of common core elements. These included: communication, rapport, language, acknowledgment, roles, resources and shared vision.

Integrative Model for Collaboration

In addition to the common core elements described above, the integrative model of collaboration also included: shared ideology, shared decision making, shared aesthetic, shared social lives, passion and intensity and the merging of ego. An integrative collaboration has usually been associated with two people and an intense and durable artistic relationship. Often these types of collaborations have existed for approximately ten years. Integrative collaborations do not exhibit a leadership style. All decisions are made jointly. Participants share an equal risk involved in financial and emotional resources. A 'third artist' phenomenon can be created from integrative collaborations, as both artists involved submerge and then merge their egos. This submergence often results in the work becoming the most important outcome of the collaboration. The integrative model for collaboration is illustrated in Figure 3:

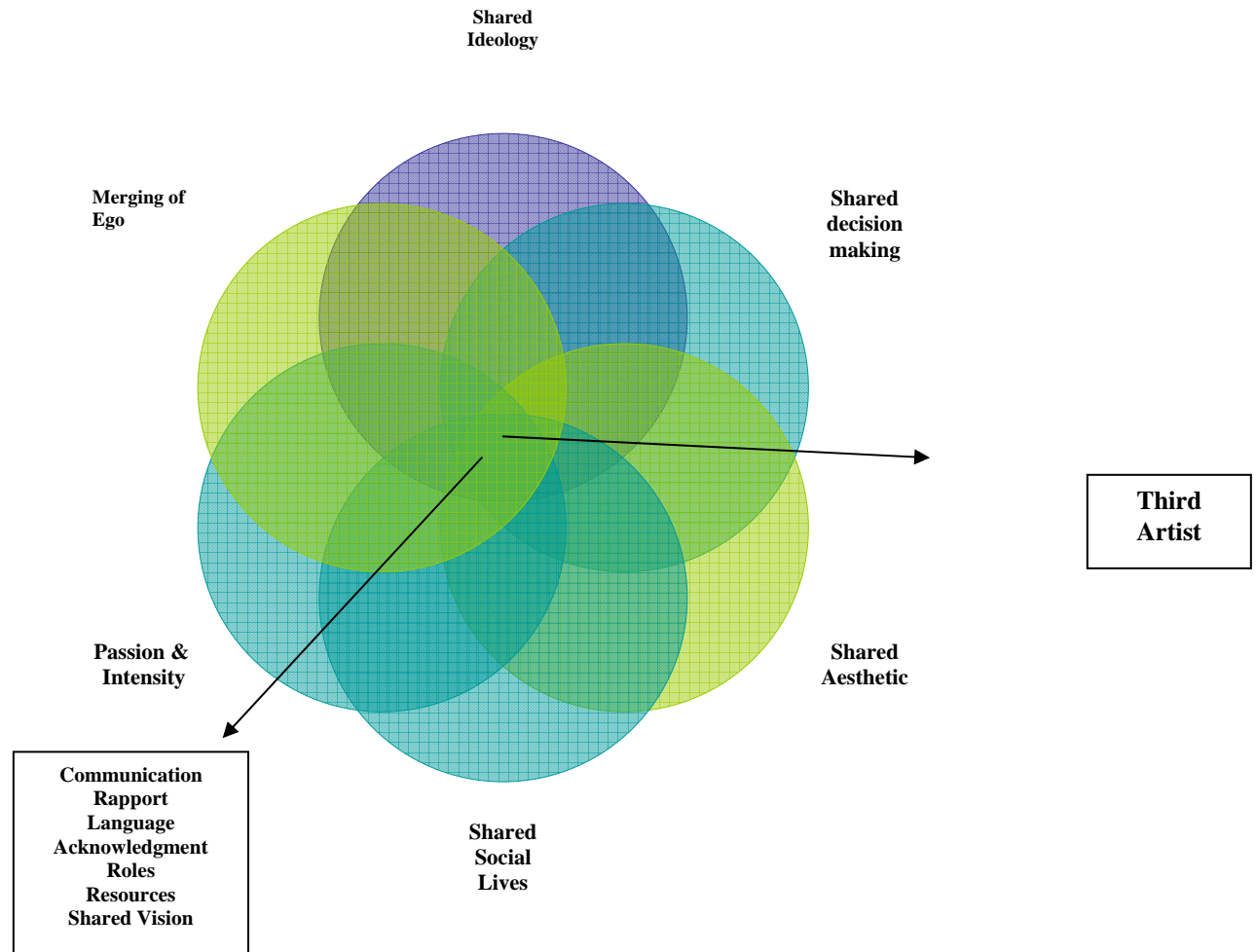


Figure 3: Integrative Model for Collaboration (Adapted from John-Steiner, 2000)

In addition to the common core elements of complementary collaborations, the following elements are evident in integrative collaborations:

Shared ideology

Artists in an integrative collaboration often grew up in the same area or region, and were educated in similar schools. They had, in the majority, undergone the same type of training in similar or closely related fields. Their beliefs about world issues and current affairs were often similar. Oftentimes they already have a prior friendship or relationship.

Shared decision making

Decisions were often jointly made within integrative collaborations. Artists were also comfortable making decisions independently, if necessary, as they are conscious of

how the other would respond. Conflict was often minimal in integrative collaborations, because there has been regular, frequent and respectful communication between the artists. However, integrative collaborations also allow for the artists to challenge their process and arrive at a solution which reflects both of their thinking.

Shared aesthetic

The creation of the ‘third artist’ through and in the work necessarily required the artists to use their skills and expertise to develop a particular aesthetic for the ‘third artist’. Even though each artist possesses a different aesthetic, their dialogue with the third artist enables them to achieve a distinctive look to their shared work.

Shared social lives

Artists in integrative collaborations spend social time together. Their friendship becomes a major factor in what sustains their collaboration. Often social and professional lives blend into one another, as they work on concepts together during times away from the studio.

Passion and intensity

Both artists exhibit a passion and intensity for the collaboration. This motivated and enabled the artists to achieve more together than they could have individually. The same level of passion and intensity was evident throughout the life of the integrative collaboration.

Merging of ego

Integrative collaborations were often characterised by a merging of names, through the utilisation of a distinct name or label representing the third artist. Artists were uncomfortable exhibiting or presenting the work without the other person there. Often artists ensured that they jointly presented information, about their work, in the public domain. Documentation associated with their collaboration often carried the name of the third artist, and then the artists’ names.

Implementation of the Models

An awareness and understanding of the characteristics, evident in complementary and integrative collaborations, would be necessary before engaging in the collaborative

process. Collaboration must be an important and durable relationship between people. The process/experience should not be something that should be used as a quick and efficient means for completing a project. These aspects would be more adequately described as cooperative or coordinated. Many of those common characteristics, such as, communication, roles and resources are also mentioned in group work texts. However, collaboration fosters interpersonal relationships and includes rapport, shared vision, acknowledgment and language.

Conclusion

This chapter examined group dynamics in a range of different sectors such as the arts, technology, the community education, and across sectors. In addition the integral role of leadership as derived from organisational texts was discussed in relation to collaborative practice. The inherent link between creativity and collaboration, and particularly social creativity, was identified through a number of organisational texts. A number of collaborative models in the arts were also described and their key factors listed and illustrated. Common characteristics between the arts models and the organisational models were also identified.

The last two chapters reviewed the literature related to this study and provided an understanding of the concept of collaboration and its relationship to arts practice. Further investigation into collaboration revealed that was necessary to research literature in the areas of group dynamics, leadership and creativity. A summary of the key characteristics from specific texts has been described in these chapters and will be further utilised later in the study. The next chapter will outline the methodology employed for this study, the selection of the case studies, a description of the participants, how data was gathered and analysed, and my interest in the phenomenon of collaboration.

Chapter 4: Investigating Collaboration

The purpose of this study was to examine and understand the characteristics and processes of collaboration in artistic practice, to investigate why it has re-emerged in the contemporary art world in recent times - even though it has been evident in the history of art - and to formulate a model of collaboration from the data which can be used to inform those willing to engage in this practice.

The study aimed to identify what collaboration is, and describe collaboration in selected contemporary Australian arts practices. This information will be used to create a model of collaborative arts practice for use by arts practitioners. The three main research questions which guided the study were:

- Why do people engage in collaborative practice?
- What are the key characteristics inherent in a successful model of collaborative practice?
- Why has collaboration only recently re-emerged as one vehicle for contemporary artistic practice?

This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology which includes the methods and techniques employed to gather the data. These methodological techniques included: structured interviews, observation, documents and artefact analysis and participant review.

The chapter has been subdivided into the following headings: Case Study & Phenomenology; Validity; Data Analysis; Reflexivity; The Purpose of the Case Studies; The Participants; The Researcher; Methods & Techniques; Implementation of Interviews; Recording the Interviews; Ethical Issues; Procedure; Recruitment of Participants; Withdrawal of Consent; The Role of the Researcher; Trustworthiness and Credibility; Data Analysis; Case Study: Parliament House Embroidery/Data Gathering; Case Study: Victorian Tapestry Workshop/Data Gathering; Curatorial Case Study: *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition/Data Gathering; and the Conclusion.

Engagement in a collaborative process requires social interaction. Collaboration by its very nature requires participants to share their working processes with other people, thereby creating an open form of communication. This allows any researcher valuable access into an established dialogue as Engeström (1994) notes:

When thinking is defined as a private, individual phenomenon only indirect data is accessible. Thinking embedded in collaborative practical activity must to a significant degree take the form of talk, gesture, use of artefacts, or some other publicly accessible instrumentality; otherwise mutual formation of ideas would be rendered impossible. Collaborative thinking opens up access to direct data on thought processes (p. 467).

Therefore, it is possible to observe the collaborative process through not its products, such as artworks in the case of artists, but also by listening to and observing the participants themselves. Collaboration is therefore unique; it is a phenomenon that cannot be replicated because it exists in the moment. The exact nuance of personal interaction, thought processes and the time of day will not occur again. This study seeks to understand and provide some insight into the experience of collaboration.

Case Study & Phenomenology

Case studies were used to present the social, historical and stages of group formation for the Parliament House Embroidery, Victorian Tapestry Workshop and *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition. These three cases were jointly studied to investigate the characteristics of, as well as examine, the process of collaboration. This approach has been described by Stake (1994) as a *collective case study*, where individual cases may be similar or dissimilar but are chosen because understanding them will lead to greater understanding of the phenomenon (p. 6). Case study was chosen for this study due to its ability ‘to contribute to our knowledge of individual, group, organisational, social, political and related phenomena’ and to ‘retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events’ (Yin, 2003, pp. 1 - 2). Case study also allowed opportunities to gather evidence through a range of methods such as analysing documents and artefacts, conducting interviews, and observing. A key characteristic of case study methodology, as noted by Gillham (2000) and Yin (1993), was the use of multiple sources of evidence to provide more than one perspective.

Phenomenology evolved from the ‘continental’ approach to the study of philosophy and began with Edmund Husserl (1859 – 1938), and later with Martin Heidegger (1890 – 1976). Phenomenology is a method of inquiry which investigated ‘meaning’ using deductive reasoning to examine the perceived form of the object itself, including any distortion in the individual’s perception. Phenomenology is not an empirical technique, but has been described as an *a priori*¹ investigation which is known to be true independently of experience of the subject matter (Bullock, Stallybrass, & Trombley, 1988, p. 645). This direct focus on the individual’s experience was a rejection of traditional empirical methods. Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962) associated language with art in his semiotic theory of perception. He proposed that writers and artists were less important than the art they produced. In this view he effectively joined the Marxists and feminists in objecting to the notion of genius (Schneider Adams, 1996, p. 141). Phenomenology has often been described as portraying ‘lived experience.’ Pollio, Henley and Thompson (1997) described it as: ‘A determinate method of inquiry [directed toward] attaining a rigorous and significant description of the world of everyday human experience as it is lived and described by specific individuals in specific circumstances’ (p. 28).

The phenomenon which will be examined in this study is collaboration, and it is therefore necessary to use descriptions that reawaken or describe ‘the lived quality and significance of the experience in a fuller or deeper manner,’ (Van Manen, 1990, p. 10). This is in order to form an intersubjective relationship with the reader. Van Manen succinctly described this as follows:

Phenomenology appeals to our immediate common experience in order to conduct a structural analysis of what is most common, most familiar, most self-evident to us. The aim is to construct an animating, evocative description (text) of human actions, behaviours, intentions, and experiences, as we meet them in the lifeworld. To this purpose the human scientist likes to make use of the works of poets, authors, artists, cinematographers – because it is in this material that the human being can

¹ Existing in the mind prior to and independent of experience, as a faculty or character trait.

be found as situated person, and it is in this work that the variety and possibility of human experience may be found in condensed and transcended form (p. 19).

Van Manen (1990) likened phenomenological inquiry to artistic endeavour. He explained that it was a creative attempt to ‘somehow capture a certain phenomenon of life in a linguistic description that is both holistic and analytical, evocative and precise, unique and universal, powerful and sensitive’ (p. 39). Sharkey (2001) described phenomenological research as seeking to move beyond the individual occurrences of a phenomenon, to describe the phenomenon itself (p. 31). Van Manen (1990) argued that the method of phenomenology, in terms of a set of investigative procedures, does not exist (p. 30). However, he does concede that there can be a broad field of phenomenological scholarship which can provide guidance and recommendations. The following steps have been drawn from this tradition and are suggestions for conducting phenomenological research. These steps have informed the approach to this study:

- investigating a phenomenon which seriously interests the researcher;
- investigating experience as it is lived, not as it is conceptualised;
- reflecting on the essential themes which characterise the phenomenon;
- describing the phenomenon through writing and re-writing;
- maintaining a strongly oriented relationship to the phenomenon;
- balancing the parts and the whole of the research context.

(Van Manen, 1990, p. 30)

In addition to providing quotes from the participants as part of this phenomenological inquiry, I have also included the substantial number of emails which transpired during the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition (Appendix 2C). As a participant within this case study, I needed to be aware of my own interactions and influence within it. In order to immediately experience the interaction between the artists and myself, I have included the email correspondence from my first contact with each of them, until just after the opening of the exhibition. The emails provided an immediate account of the conversations taking place at various points in the sequence of the exhibition. I have also included emails with the Academy Gallery Director, Malcom Bywaters, which

provide important descriptions of the curatorial process through the discussions of the various queries and concerns which arose. The emails provided an immediate pre-reflective response to events occurring at the time, and will provide insights that will allow the reader more direct contact with this experience.

Barnacle (2001) acknowledged that phenomenological research was not just limited to the interview context, but to other ‘participants’ such as text, art, music, or any other phenomena with which a relationship of understanding was possible (p. vii). As part of the phenomenological inquiry of this study, it was also necessary to consider the art works in the exhibition (Appendix 2N). Each artistic medium has its own language of expression, and can therefore be used as a textual resource. Reinach (2002) described art as allowing us to view what was already there, but without our being conscious of it. Moran (2000) perceived art as having the capacity of being able to look innocently, without trying to form an opinion. His perception was aligned with that of the theorist Hans-Georg Gadamer, who considered art to be the site of unique truths. He believed art was placed within a particular social context, which was not accessible through the normal methodology of the sciences:

When we have a genuine confrontation with art, we are in the realm of truth, and if we have only an aesthetic experience it is because we have become alienated in some way from the art work. For Gadamer, a genuine art work stands within a particular community, but even there, there will be blindness (Moran, 2000, p. 281).

Gadamer’s major work, *Truth and Method* described the rise of aesthetic consciousness, and how during the course of this transition ‘the concept of genius is said to take the place of judgements of taste, and at the same time the artwork loses its connection with the world’ (Cooper, 1995, p. 168). This description revealed the importance of the phenomenological inquiry of lived experience, in terms of relationships and context. The art works in the exhibitions were representing individual, yet truthful expressions of the artist’s experience, which have been affected by the community context in which they have been created. Cultural critic Dick Hebdige (1992) however, refuted the claim that artworks symbolise truth: ‘The intellectual, the critic, the artist, can no longer claim to have privileged access to the

Truth or even to knowledge, at least to the knowledge that counts' (p. 340). The individual truth of the artist may not be understood by the viewer, who has primarily encountered the work as an aesthetic entity. Van Manen (1990) noted, an artistic text was reflective, because the artist creates experiences by transcending them:

Objects of art are visual, tactile, auditory, kinetic texts – texts consisting of not a verbal language but a language nonetheless, and a language with its own grammar. Because artists are involved in giving shape to their lived experience, the products of art are, in a sense, lived experiences transformed into transcended configurations (p. 74).

The phenomenological inquiry of this study will focus, through the case studies, how the collaborative process was perceived by the participants. It will also describe the social contexts that each of the case studies exists within, in order to situate the participants' 'lived experience'.

'Continental' or European philosophy aimed to take abstract concepts and construct a theory to explain them. This was in opposition to traditional analytic philosophy, which analysed and defined concepts which were usually abstract. Husserl (1990) attempted to revive philosophy with a new humanism, in order to restore the reality of humans in their 'life worlds.' The four existential life-worlds he described are: spatial (acknowledging the experience of the space we are in), temporal (acknowledging the time we are in, our past, present and future), corporeal (acknowledging that the body enables us to be in the world) and relational (acknowledging where and when we are interpersonally connected). These four life worlds are interrelated and constitute the one life world which is personal to each individual. Munhall (1994) stated:

It is critical to acknowledge the subjective nature of these life-worlds and that the perceptions of any of them will differ among people who are even very close to us. For example, their past is different and therefore influences their perception of the present. Their gender may be different, as well as their cultural space. To know this is to understand that we are living in the moment, our present, which also contains someone's future and someone's past (pp. 56 - 57).

Subjectivity therefore, can be seen to expand and enrich the authenticity of perceptions and understandings of phenomena, and is, therefore, essential in phenomenological inquiry. Researchers engaged in phenomenology are advised to use the technique of 'bracketing', in order to explore the meaning that the particular experience has for us as an individual. Through bracketing, the researcher describes any prior experience they may have had with the phenomena under investigation or why they are interested in that particular experience. This strategy allows the researcher to recognise and become attuned to their own beliefs about the phenomenon. By engaging in this strategy, the researcher has provided 'space' for the participants to voice their perceptions of the phenomenon. I have engaged in bracketing in the section of this chapter titled 'The Researcher.'

Validity

Validity in qualitative research has been described by McMillan and Schumacher (2006) as the degree to which 'the interpretations have *mutual meanings* between the participants and the researcher' (p. 324). In other words, both the researcher and participants clarify and subsequently agree on the description and meaning of events. Participant review was utilised in this research, which meant each person was asked to review a transcript of their interview to ensure that it contained an accurate record of what transpired. In almost all cases only very slight grammatical modifications were made which did not affect the initial transcript. It was evident that an important and essential part of this process was to clarify misunderstood phrases or words to ensure that both the participants and the researcher understood what meanings were being conveyed. Munhall (1994) described validity in phenomenological studies as 'the unaltered faithful telling of experiences by people' (p. 84). For this reason quotes have been used through each of the three case studies, in addition to providing full transcripts of each interview (Appendix 1C). Van Manen (1990) described interviews as being an extremely important part of understanding a phenomenon, but conceded that it was also necessary to include information from other sources. Additionally, external validity was also used in this study to identify and describe those characteristics of collaboration which existed in sectors outside of the arts.

During the course of this study audio-recorded interviews were conducted with the participants. The word-processed transcripts were returned to the interviewees so that they could be checked for accuracy of meaning. Variations of the same questions were asked of different members in the case study. This was so their responses could be compared to others in the group, to verify whether the factual information was essentially the same. However, there was enough flexibility in the interviews to allow the interviewer to gather other information, which could provide further insights into the participant's view of the collaborative process. This information was then considered with other sources of information obtained from documents, archives, observations, anecdotal conversations and artefacts to determine whether there were commonalities in the information that had been provided, thereby providing validity or non-validity.

Throughout the study it was important to continually ask myself how accurate and relevant was the quality of the data gathered from the participants. It was also important to consider if my personal biases had affected the collection and interpretation of the data. Being aware of these issues, and taking active measures to minimise and acknowledge them, enhanced the validity of the study. Although it is difficult in qualitative research to totally eliminate researcher bias, at times it actually may not be desirable. It was however possible to incorporate strategies to help reduce it. McMillan & Schumacher (2006) and Gay (2003) described several strategies to enhance validity. The strategies I utilised for this study included making a concerted effort to obtain participant trust, thus providing more detailed, honest information from participants. I also tried to recognise my own biases and preferences and their possible effects on the data. Interviews of the participants were audio recorded and they were asked to review the transcript for accuracy of representation. I also actively searched for, recorded, analysed and reporting negative or discrepant data that were an exception to the patterns. The data was then corroborated by using triangulation.

Triangulation is a method which relies on different data sources to confirm one another, such as when an interview about an event, documents relating to the event and other participant's recollections appear to confirm the same version of the data. During the study it was salient as advised by McMillan & Schumacher (2006) to compare different situations, sources, and methods to see whether the same patterns

kept recurring. This enabled me to see if there were regularities in the form of categories evident in the data. Triangulation occurs as a result of information being gathered from at least three other sources. In this study, observation, interviews, documents, artefacts and participant review were all used as a way to collect and corroborate the data. This also helps to alleviate researcher bias, by providing a number of sources of evidence, in addition to the personal observation of the researcher.

Gillham (2000) noted that a research investigation was not neutral, and it was therefore important to recognise that there will be effects on people because of the researcher's presence and their function to ask questions, clarify procedures and collect data. Therefore, the researcher needs to acknowledge this in their observations and be aware of subjective bias which is 'a constant threat to objective data-gathering and analysis' (Best & Kahn, 2006, p. 261). Gay (2003) described this as *observer bias*, which can occur when the researcher identifies with one or more participants, which can affect the way information is portrayed in different groups (p. 213). An awareness of the factors which can affect or present a biased view of the data underpins the validity of the research.

Data Analysis

The data from these interviews were then analysed to determine patterns and categories that were important to the research. This qualitative data was subsequently organised using QSR N6 computer software to code and graphically represent groupings of the data to determine similarities and dissimilarities between the information given by the participants. It was important not to have pre-conceived categories, but to allow the data to create categories as it was gathered. The interview documents and email correspondence was entered into the QSR N6 software and then coded using nodes. The nodes are containers for ideas and are also a way of coding a range of data. The final node index revealed the range and relationships of ideas generated by the data (See Appendix 1D). QSR N6 software also contained techniques to support analysis of the data through intersecting, overlapping and joining nodes. These functions were the three most commonly used to analyse the data. Intersection searches only for the information coded at both nodes. Overlap

gives the context of the information as well as the intersection. Union seamlessly merges all nodes to give a larger picture of what is being searched for.

In order to determine the nodes, it was necessary to work through the interviews and email correspondence. Data analysis for phenomenological enquiry aimed to uncover and produce a description of the lived experience. There has been reluctance in phenomenological enquiry to outline specific steps undertaken to gain and categorise the information. This has been due to the concern that phenomenology will be treated as a research method from the natural sciences. For this study I have adapted an approach by Colaizzi (1978), who argued for descriptive research. This process of analysis was particularly valuable in categorising the interview data, and was used to inform the categories used in the QSR software. The process is described as follows:

- read the participants' narratives to acquire a feeling for their ideas in order to understand them fully;
- extract significant statements, such as words and sentences relating to the phenomenon under investigation;
- formulate meanings for each significant statement;
- repeat this process from each description from the participant and arrange them into clusters of themes;
- integrate all the resulting ideas into an exhaustive description of the phenomenon under study;
- reduce the exhaustive description of the phenomenon to an essential structure, also described as an unequivocal statement of identification of the fundamental structure of the phenomenon.

(pp. 59 - 61)

The significant statements, formulated meanings and categories were colour coded so they could be linked back to the text and to the tables constructed from this information (Appendix 1E). From the information clusters began to emerge and category titles were consolidated. The category titles were entered as nodes into QSR N6 software, and the information was coded to the nodes. Some of the nodes began to merge with other nodes which can be observed in the final index report. Using this

information, the phenomenological essence of collaboration for the participants was described at the conclusion of each case study.

Reflexivity

During the entire process of the study it was important to maintain a reflexive practice, which Sullivan (2005) described as a research activity in the visual arts which ‘works against’ existing theories and practices, and offers the possibility of seeing phenomena in new ways (p. 100). Sullivan’s research practices are useful to a visual arts practitioner engaged in research and whose own art’s practice can be described as investigative, multilayered and eclectic. He identified three reflexive practices which were appropriate for the visual arts researcher. The first, *self-reflexive practice* describes an inquiry process directed by personal and creative insight, yet informed by discipline knowledge and research expertise. The opportunity to work, as both a practitioner and researcher, in the visual arts has provided me with a good grounding in this strategy, because it enhanced my ability to consider existing data, texts and concepts, whilst simultaneously considering alternatives in a lateral and imaginative way.

The second, *reflective practice* is one in which the researcher reflected on information gathered in order to review conceptual strategies used and consider other approaches. Sullivan described this strategy as similar to one used by gallery curators who assemble a range of art works, in order to present a particular ‘reading’ of an exhibition. The plausibility or validity of the interpretation of the research findings is determined by the capacity of the reflexive researcher’s ability to openly dialogue with the information. This practice assesses the ‘truth’ by discussion and logical disputation between the researcher and the researched. The final strategy is to question both content and context as unusual or problematic situations are revealed within particular settings. Sullivan concluded it was possible to conduct an inquiry in the visual arts combining all of these reflexive practices.

Mcmillan & Schumacher (2006) explained reflexivity as both recognition of the ‘self’, and recognition of the ‘other’, which allows the participant and researcher to speak for themselves:

Qualitative research depends to a great extent on the interpersonal skills of the inquirer, such as building trust, keeping good relations, being non-judgemental, and respecting the norms of the situation. Researchers use all their personal experiences and abilities of engagement, balancing the analytical and creative through empathetic understanding and profound respect for participants' perspectives. Interpersonal emotions in field work are essential in data collection activities because of the face-to-face interaction (p. 327).

This statement was particularly relevant during the interview process, when there were interpersonal political and emotional undertones to what was being said. An awareness of these issues assisted me in contextualising some of the responses of the participants to my questions, but also created tensions which I had to be aware of and consider when coding and categorising the data.

Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2005) described reflexive interpretation as a way to avoid the sole authority of the text to dominate. This reduces the claims that the research is presenting 'definite truths, authoritative interpretations, or superior insights about the constraints on freedom vis-à-vis the subjects studied' (p. 249). Therefore, the researcher does not use a single, abstract framework to offer a privileged understanding of the phenomenon, or provide generalisations from the data. Alvesson and Sköldbberg stated:

Reflexivity arises when the different elements or levels are played off against each other. It is in these relations and in the interfaces that reflexivity occurs. This approach is based upon an assumption – and implies – that no element is totalised; that is, they are all taken with a degree of seriousness, but there is no suggestion that any one of them is the bearer of the Right or Most Important Insight (p. 249).

Applying reflexivity to the research involved various levels of interpretation which began with the data-gathering. Observations were made, participants were interviewed and data was formed into initial categories, which could be changed as more data was gathered. Once the data had been collected from a

greater variety of sources it was possible to apply a more systematic interpretation. During the data collection, it had become evident, that particular commonalities or themes were emerging in each of the case studies. These included: issues relating to gender, the way particular forms were perceived by the art world and group dynamics. These emerging themes were then brought together with the data to create an understanding of the collaborative process.

Due to the fact that case study is an all encompassing method it can be considered as ineffective research, particularly if investigators have not followed systematic procedures. However, Alvesson & Sköldberg (2005) argued ‘the capacity to swing between empathy and understanding on the one hand and critical questioning, reflection, conceptualisation and theoretical abstraction on the other, is the hallmark of good research’ (p. 219). Therefore the case study approach in conjunction with reflexivity and phenomenological inquiry allowed the opportunity to interview participants, observe and collect data, whilst simultaneously reflecting on and interpreting the information as it became available.

The Purpose of the Case Studies

Each of the case studies will be expanded on in chapters five, six and seven and will provide a descriptive, interpretative and phenomenological treatment of the data. In order to reveal the commonalities and particularities of each case the following elements as recommended by Stake (2000) will be examined: the nature of the case; the case’s historical background; the physical setting; other contexts (e.g. economic, political, legal, and aesthetic); and those informants through whom the case can be known. In addition, each case will be sectioned into Tuckman’s (1965) four stages of group development: forming, storming, norming and performing. The organisation of the data in this way recognised the importance of group formation and dynamics in the collaborative process. The purpose of each case study is to:

... take the reader into the case situation – a person’s life, a group’s life, or a program’s life. Each case study in a report stands alone, allowing the reader to understand the case holistically. At a later point in analysis it is possible to compare and contrast cases, but initially each case must be represented and understood as an idiosyncratic and unique phenomenon.

The descriptions of the cases should be holistic and comprehensive, given the focus of evaluation, and will include myriad dimensions, factors, variables, and categories woven together into an ideographic framework (Patton, 1987, p. 148).

The Parliament House Embroidery (PHE), the Victorian Tapestry Workshop (VTW) and the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition (POP) have all been described and publicly documented as collaborative ventures. As such they were able to provide material for this investigation. The first two case studies were chosen based on their longevity and recognition as collaborative partnerships or groups. Utilising a number of participants in these case studies also alleviated the problems which would arise when observing two people working together, and the disruption between their thinking and communicating which can occur. There was also extensive written documentation regarding the PHE and VTW which provided further information with which to triangulate material gathering during the interviews. As the curator of the POP exhibition I had privileged access to the artist's studios and work. The unique relationship between curator and artist allowed a greater insight into the artists' collaborative working processes.² The inclusion of the POP exhibition as part of the case studies helped to balance the focus on textiles through the PHE and VTW case studies, and provided an opportunity to determine commonalities in the collaborative process across partnerships, small groups and institutional groups.

McMillan and Schumacher (2006) described the study of several entities within the research as a multi-site study, which they explained as utilising and contrasting groups to investigate the extent or diversity of the phenomenon (p. 327). This description was also similar to Stake's terminology of a collective case study. The groups themselves are not viewed as statistically comparative or mutually exclusive. This was important due to the fact that the activity of one case study, the *Parliament House Embroidery*, was based on the period of its creation from 1984 – 1988, and has been therefore, investigated retrospectively through existing participants. The Victorian Tapestry Workshop has been operating since 1976 and the collaborative

² The School of Visual and Performing Arts at the University of Tasmania offer a creative component for doctoral students to create their own work in conjunction with their PhD study. However, I felt in order to fully investigate the collaborative process I would curate an exhibition of four different collaborative groups rather than to work singly with another artist or small group.

process was investigated through interviews with current participants, documentation and observation of the creation of their tapestries. The final case study, the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition which I curated, investigated the collaborative process through the work of contemporary artists who publicly acknowledge, and have been recognised by the art world as working collaboratively.

The Participants

Participants in this research included:

- Case Study: The Parliament House Embroidery (PHE): Members of the State and Territory Embroidery Guilds of Australia, and the designer of the PHE.
- Case Study: The Victorian Tapestry Workshop (VTW): Weavers and director.
- Case Study: The *Partnership or Perish?* (POP) exhibition which was shown at the University of Tasmania's School of Visual and Performing Arts – Inveresk campus in the Academy Gallery from July 14 – September 10, 2006: Artists who participated in the exhibition.

The Researcher

As a researcher it was important to describe my own background and acknowledge how my biases, values and interests can affect the research. This sensitivity to personal biography as stated earlier in the text is known as reflexivity and acknowledges that all research is laden with values (Creswell, 2003). I grew up on the Darling Downs in Queensland and would therefore describe my upbringing as white, rural and middle class. In our large extended family I was the first person to attend higher education by enrolling in a Diploma of Creative Arts, majoring in Textiles, at the former Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education (DDIAE), now known as the University of Southern Queensland (USQ). I then decided that a teaching qualification would be an important addition to my visual art skills. After completing this I worked as a teacher in Western Queensland for five years, before I moved back to Brisbane to further my studies. During this period I continued my studies upgrading to a BAVA and eventually a MA (Research) in visual arts. Throughout my studies I taught art in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions.

The inspiration for this research began during an artist-in-residence at Arthur Boyd's property 'Bundanon' in Nowra, New South Wales in September/October, 1998. During the course of the residency I was granted access to the archives of the Boyd family including sketch books, diaries, photo albums, texts and artefacts. My proposal for the artist-in-residence stated that I particularly wished to investigate the lives of five of the women in the Boyd family: Emmie Minnie Boyd, Doris Boyd, Hermia Boyd, Mary Boyd, and Yvonne Boyd.³ The research in the Boyd archives led me to question the circumstances and personal motivation which enables or hinders people in relationships to pursue their own goals.

This question led me to contact each of the state and territory galleries in Australia to obtain lists of artists in their collection who had been or were involved in relationships whilst still creating their art work. I engaged in this process to identify how many couples were supportive of one another. As the term collaboration has become increasingly used in contemporary art, I decided that was the term I would use when writing to each of the galleries. Replies were received from the Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW); the Queensland Art Gallery (QAG); the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT); the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG); the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV); and the Art Gallery of West Australia (AGWA). In most cases they were able to provide extensive listings of artists involved in partnerships within their collection, but as one curator noted: 'Once you start thinking about partnerships it is amazing how many there are. Mind you we do not have any work by partners which particularly relates or is collaborative. Often the works have been acquired quite separately' (name withheld).

Further investigation of this issue revealed societal and gender expectations had resulted in a number of these artists working separately, and at times, with subject matter, and/or media which could be described as being 'feminine' or 'masculine'. There was also evidence that the stereotypical myth of the artist as a genius, and

³ It appeared that although some of the women in the family had been recognised as artists, the most noteworthy was Arthur Boyd's Grandmother, Emma Minnie Boyd. There were others including his sister Mary - who married the artists John Perceval and Sidney Nolan respectively - and his wife Yvonne. Both women had exhibited their work, but after their marriages discontinued their artistic pursuits. Hermia Boyd married Arthur Boyd's brother David and was recognised predominately for her ceramics partnership with him. Doris Boyd, Arthur's mother also painted but gave this up to support her husband's pottery business and raise their children.

usually male, had been fostered by the lack of acknowledgment given to partners who were instrumental in their success. Another curator advised that there were several indigenous couples who work collaboratively and were represented by their gallery, however implied that societal expectations also make this difficult to clearly define:

... there may also be others as collaboration between married couples is relatively common in Aboriginal art although many of these relationships go unrecognised as the most prominent artist often takes the credit. I think this non-recognition is convenient for the art centre administering payment etc., although usually they know that collaboration was involved (name withheld).

In a follow up email the curator was able to expand upon this point and also to provide further information regarding collaboration in indigenous communities:

Our time and resources are limited however collaboration and its attendant problems as far as the art market perceive the issues are constantly with us. However I know that when talking to people about Indigenous art I often emphasise that collaboration could almost be regarded as a typically Indigenous way of operating ... I'm not sure how open people are about collaboration as the western art market favours the individual so you may find there is a reluctance to declare these relationships. Collaboration is obviously an important question vis-à-vis Indigenous art and it would be good to further the discussion however this may be too big a project for you to undertake at this point (name withheld).

Although some of the state and territory gallery lists did identify artists who worked together on particular pieces, they were not able to identify which artists or groups had collaborated together, as opposed to co-operated together. Given the broad scope of collaboration it became necessary to identify artists who had clearly acknowledged the collaborative nature of their work, and had been identified by the art world as working in this way. Evidence was sought through joint authorship on documentation associated with the work, in addition to statements in art journals or media releases, which confirmed this working arrangement. For this study I also felt it was important

to research collaborations which had existed for a number of years and were well established. During the initial searches for information it was difficult to find any historical documentation about collaborations. Although a number of contemporary artists state that they collaborated with another person or group, they have often either directed the other person or group, or segmented various tasks to other people.

I was particularly interested in the case studies that I chose due to my background as an artist working in the fields of textiles, sculpture and installation. As a researcher my previous and ongoing interests include the role of the artist, the historical and contemporary tensions between the perceptions of art and craft, and how gender and societal expectations affect this position. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) state that knowledge has been perceived as subjective and society was ‘essentially structured by class and status, as well as by race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation’ (p. 27). Therefore consideration of how gender and society affects the collaborative process has been one important element of this research. As two of the case studies, the PHE and VTW, were predominately composed of women, it was important to consider how central their experiences and concerns were to the data collected for the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; Olesen, 2005; Reinhartz, 1992; Schneider, Elliott, LoBiondo-Wood, & Haber, 2003; Weeks, 1994) Tong (1995) recognised the inherent value of women’s ways of being, thinking and doing has been in research involving women participants. Incorporated in this recognition has been the necessity to understand the complex cultural and social contexts which both women and men exist within.

My interpersonal skills, it could be argued, have been well developed through both my teaching experiences and the various administrative roles of responsibility I have held. I feel that this enabled me to approach my participants with a certain degree of sensitivity and professionalism, appropriate to their individual situations. The guild members were reminiscent of older women from sewing circles I had been associated with when growing up, and I felt quite at ease talking with them about their participation in the Parliament House Embroidery. I also feel that my textiles background, gender and the fact that I am also an artist was also very helpful during the interview process, as it allowed me to understand the techniques they were discussing and also to contribute in these conversations. All of the weavers at the

VTW have been trained as fine artists, and then became weavers, so we had this early training in common. In both of these case studies the participants, except for one male at the VTW were women, Anglo-Saxon, white and the majority were from middle class backgrounds. The fact that there was a commonality amongst the participants and myself as the interviewer created a situation that Best and Kahn (2006) described as ‘more successful in establishing rapport’ (p. 337).

In contrast the artists involved in *Partnership or Perish?* appeared to feel secure in the knowledge that I was part of an institutional framework which supported a very well recognised exhibition program. I felt this aspect of my academic position was important in my relationship with them. As the curator for the exhibition it was my academic role and artistic background which enabled me to approach the artists with a certain level of legitimacy. This was particularly important in terms of how their creative contribution could be counted as part of their research profile. The opportunity to exhibit, in a university recognised exhibition, and to enhance research output was a strong incentive for at least three of the artist groups that were approached.⁴ As Ely (2003) noted: ‘Employment, tenure and promotion in the university sector [has been] assessed primarily on the excellence of research’ (p. 9). Cross (2004) supported this statement by noting that the obligation to produce research outcomes is a conscious acceptance of a degree of pressure ‘in return for the security of tenure and leverage of holding institutional positions’ (p. 658).⁵ My understanding of this situation enabled me to recognise why particular types of questions were being asked and to provide the type of information that was being sought. I had to recognise that the artists I dealt with have national, and in some cases, international profiles, and had to weigh up their participation in the exhibition and the research with this in mind.

Methods and Techniques

Interviews

Although interviewing can be time-consuming, it was the most appropriate method to obtain personalised information about the collaborative process. As Gillham (2000)

⁴ This has become an issue which academics generally, but particularly in areas such as visual arts, music and drama, are endeavouring to address.

⁵ This tension between continuity and change is characteristic of all institutions as societal and cultural changes affect their operations.

noted the overwhelming strengths of the interview is the richness of the communication that eventuates from the process itself (p. 62). Some authors suggest that interviewing has also been seen as being consistent with women's interest in avoiding control over others and developing a sense of connectedness with people (Reinharz, 1992, p. 20).

The purpose of the interviews was to establish first-hand knowledge of the collaborative process by using a form of interaction which would reveal the human element which can be missing from text-based accounts. Due to the complex and intrinsically human nature of collaboration, it would have been irresponsible to rely only on external sources of information. Kvale (1996) succinctly described the importance of obtaining first-hand accounts as opposed to secondary sources:

There is a move away from obtaining knowledge primarily through external observation and experimental manipulation of human subjects, toward an understanding by means of conversations with the human beings to be understood. The subjects not only answer questions prepared by an expert, but themselves formulate in a dialogue their own conceptions of their lived world. The sensitivity of the interview and its closeness to the subjects' lived world can lead to knowledge that can be used to enhance the human condition (p. 11).

Patton (1987) further noted that interviewing also enabled the researcher to learn about things that cannot be directly observed such as feelings, thoughts, intentions and behaviours that have taken place at another point in time (p. 109). The collaborative process can be quite difficult to observe first-hand as the researcher can upset the delicate balance between various people who are collaborating, and therefore cannot attach their own interpretation to the process without asking the participants about their personal perspectives.

The opportunity to establish a direct relationship with participants was another reason why interviews were chosen as a primary source for gathering data about the collaborative process. Kvale (1996) noted that 'the interview as such is, however, neither a progressive nor an oppressive method' (p. 11) and has been

seen as a more egalitarian way of including the participant actively within the research. Fontana & Frey (2005) strongly emphasised the removal of barriers when interviewing women particularly. The traditional interview process in which the interviewee was reduced to text-based material does not account for gender differences:

The sex of the interviewer and the sex of the respondent make a difference because the interview takes place within the cultural boundaries of a paternalistic social system in which masculine identities are differentiated from feminine ones (p. 710).

The emphasis in interviewing for qualitative research has now shifted from an impersonal stance, to one which allows a closer relationship between the interviewer and interviewee. When I first began my interviews I realised that I needed to ‘give’ something of myself, in terms of personal background, for the respondent to reciprocate in kind. Douglas (1985) referred to this as a *quid pro quo* of good faith. Reinharz (1992) noted that woman in contemporary Western society have been socialised to ask people what they think and feel, and therefore this interaction of ‘giving’ is something that is not unnatural for me. During the course of the research it was the personal interactions that helped to establish rapport, ultimately resulting in more relevant and valuable interview data.

The advantages and disadvantages to using interviews as a primary source of data collection have been described in detail by Burns (2000) and Kumar (1997). The advantages include the appropriateness of interviews for complex situations. Interviews also enabled the opportunity to obtain in-depth information and to check for understanding. There was a greater rate of return by participants to interviews because people are more willing to talk and react verbally than to reply to written responses. The observation of the participant’s non-verbal behaviour can provide an added dimension to the data collection. Face-to-face interaction can assist in the establishment of rapport and a higher level of motivation amongst the participants, and also allows the researcher to individually thank participants for their involvement. The disadvantages included that interviews were time-consuming and expensive, particularly if travel is involved. Only a limited number of people can be interviewed

due to time and financial constraints. The relationship between the interviewer and participant may inadvertently affect the quality of the data, and the subsequent results or outcomes of the research can also be compromised if the interviewer is biased. Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2005) also noted that what people say in interviews can differ from what they ‘really’ think, and questioned whether people actually have definite, ambivalent conceptions, values and attitudes which can be explicitly expressed at all:

There is reason to doubt whether statements about the way people see reality, express experiences, or perceive themselves, for instance, actually reflect a particular idea, belief or self-image in an unproblematic way. The problem is that, in order to be comprehensible and meaningful, utterances are necessarily context-dependent – not only in the obvious sense that people express themselves differently in public and private settings ... but because what people say is also contextually dependent at a more subtle level (p. 202).

I felt that the advantages of interviewing outweighed the disadvantages, and that prior knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages helped alleviate, and hopefully avoided, many of the impediments outlined.

The phenomenological interview is a dialogue between the researcher and the participants. Welch (2001) described the focus of the interview was to give a first-person account of a human experience. In the context of this study participants were encouraged to discuss their experience of collaboration. In phenomenological inquiry the role of the researcher is to engage the participant in an open dialogue. I found it necessary however, to utilise a semi-focussed approach to the interview process, particularly given the time restrictions. Patton (1987) described how an interview guide provided important parameters, yet encouraged flexibility during the interview process:

The interview guide simply serves as a basic checklist during the interview to make sure that all relevant topics are covered. The interviewer is thus required to adapt both the wording and sequence of

questions to specific respondents in the context of the actual interview. The interviewer remains free to build a conversation within a particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversational style – but with the focus on a particular predetermined subject. The advantage of an interview guide is that it makes sure the interviewer has carefully decided how best to use the limited time available in an interview situation. The interview guide helps make interviewing different people more systematic and comprehensive by delimiting the issues to be discussed in the interview (p. 111).

Patton also noted that it was possible to combine an informal conversational approach with an interview guide. In the interview structure Best and Kahn (2006) recommended using open-formed questions:

An open-form question in which the subject is encouraged to answer in his or her own words at some length is likely to provide greater depth of response. In fact, this penetration exploits the advantage of the interview in getting beneath-the-surface reactions. However, distilling the essence of the reaction is difficult, and interviewer bias may be a hazard. The closed-form question (in the pattern of a multiple-choice response) is easier to record but may yield more superficial information (pp. 335 - 336).

When constructing the interview guide I was concerned with using the word collaboration in case it caused the participants to change their response to suit this description. However, I tried to balance this with the question “Would you describe your own work as being collaborative?”, after they had described what they thought the word collaboration meant. As the word collaboration had been used on the information and consent forms it seemed disingenuous for it not to appear in the interview guide. I tried to avoid leading questions which would imply a specific answer. As Patton noted (1987) the main purpose of qualitative interviewing is to minimise the imposition of predetermined responses when gathering data, and therefore it is critical to use open-ended questions. Therefore the first question asked the participants to use a term which would describe their working processes. It was hoped by this question that I would be able to use their term throughout the

interview.⁶ I endeavoured to make the questions as clear and concise as I could as unclear questions can make the person being interviewed feel uncomfortable, ignorant, confused or hostile (Patton, 1987, p. 123).

The interview guide which formed the basis of the interviews consisted of the following questions:

1. What term would you use to describe your working process?
2. Can you describe what you think the word *collaboration* means?
3. Would you describe your own work as being collaborative? Please explain your answer.
4. Do you think collaboration has become more acceptable in contemporary art practice and can you explain why or why not?
5. Do you think all of the people involved in the production of an artwork, should be acknowledged? Why or why not?
6. Do you think gender is an important factor in collaborative projects? Why or why not?
7. What are the advantages and disadvantages to working in a collaborative way?

The first three questions, in the interview schedule, looked for a personal response, whereas the last four questions were more general, yet still concerned with the collaborative process. At times participants used personal experiences for all of the questions. I felt it was important to contextualise the last four questions in a more general way, to ascertain how their personal views and experiences about collaboration differed from their wider perception of the collaborative process. These questions were necessarily adapted, or the order was slightly changed, depending on who I was interviewing. I was conscious during each of the interviews to make the participant feel as comfortable and relaxed as possible by actively listening and providing encouragement, and by endeavouring to establish a degree of rapport beforehand, either through prior contact or by showing enough interest to have viewed and researched their work.

⁶ However, the majority of participants mainly described their working process using a short description instead of an explicit term.

Implementation of Interviews

Parliament House Embroidery

The purpose of interviewing people associated with the Parliament House Embroidery was to determine the extent of collaboration in a piece also known as ‘the work of many hands.’ It was therefore important to interview the designer of the PHE in addition to each of the state and territory guild supervisors, and members who were intimately involved and worked on the embroidery itself. Burns (2000) stated that interviews are essential in case studies: ‘...most case studies are about people and their activities. These need to be reported and interpreted through the eyes of interviewees who provide important insights and identify other sources of evidence’ (p. 467).

I was fortunate in being able to access the archives of the PHE, before I interviewed any of the participants. The archives held at the National Library in Canberra contain recordings made at the time of the supervisor’s meetings and feedback from the designer to the guilds. The information gained through the interviews from the participants about their work on the PHE reflected their recall of this experience. In some cases recollections were prompted by photographs and samples worked on during the course of the embroidery. Jackson, Daly & Chang (2003, p. 147) stated that not all qualitative studies involve oral interviews or observations, and therefore the archives provided another rich source of information about the PHE. However, although the collaborative process can be alluded to in written text, it was important that the participants articulated their understanding of this complex term. This was in order to compare their perception of collaboration with other participants and against findings in the literature.

Victorian Tapestry Workshop

I completed an artist-in-residence at The Victorian Tapestry Workshop in November/December 2004. During this time there were twelve weavers employed, although some were on leave at the time of the residency. There was one male weaver, and the rest were female. After speaking with the director and the weavers, it appeared that women have traditionally been in the majority throughout the history of the workshop. The weavers were a tight-knit group and some of them socialise

together outside of their work hours. It was difficult to interview the weavers as a group as the VTW operates as a production workshop. The weavers only had designated break times to relax from the strain of the physical labour required when tapestry weaving. It seemed extremely discourteous to use this time to facilitate my own research needs. In consultation with the director I asked the weavers if they would mind if I interviewed them whilst they worked, which seemed to be a good compromise. Most of the interviews were conducted individually, with the exception of one interview which took place in front of the large Roger Kemp tapestry being worked on by four weavers.

The weavers were very generous in their time and were able to both work on their tapestry and focus on the questions that were being asked. They described the process of interpretation that goes on between the artist, the image and the tapestry and how they perceived this to be a collaborative process. I was able to use the tapestry they were working on as a prompt for the interview schedule, modifying the questions so that they were more specific to the work. The interviews which lasted between thirty to forty-five minutes were only conducted in the last week of the residency when the weavers felt more comfortable with my presence, and after they had attended my artist talk.

Susie Shears (Director VTW)

Susie Shears was appointed to the directorship of the VTW the week after I finished my residency in December 2004. Sue Walker was the founding director of the workshop which began in 1976, and had appointed Grazyna Bleja in 2004 as Director Elect. Unfortunately, due to health problems, Grazyna's position was temporarily taken over by Kate Derum. In the interests of stability Susie Shears was appointed director at the end of 2004, although Kate Derum had stepped in during Susie's leave in 2005. After such a long and constant flow of leadership changes the weavers felt they were unsettled by such a rapid turnover of people in that role. However, the administrative team headed by Kaye Fauckner had been very supportive and has ensured that the workshop continues to run smoothly and that commissions were completed on time.

The interview with Shears lasted for approximately thirty minutes, and was conducted in the gallery space adjacent to the main weaving area. Shears emphasised the collaborative aspects of the workshop and how the process of collaboration occurred between the artist and the weavers. She responded easily and confidently to the questions and it was obvious that she regarded collaboration as an essential and necessary element underpinning the philosophy of the workshop.

Partnership or Perish? exhibition

The *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition was an initiative I put forward to the School of Visual and Performing Arts at the University of Tasmania. My proposal was enthusiastically supported by Mr Malcom Bywaters the Gallery Director. In the interests of this study I felt being able to examine four groups of artists in the role of curator would provide valuable insights to the collaborative processes.

Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford are an artist partnership, based in Sydney New South Wales, known as the Turpin Crawford Studio. The Turpin Crawford Studio creates large scale site-specific works. They aim to create a relationship between the viewer and the work by utilising the rhythms of nature such as those found in wind and water. They described their approach as building a relationship with the site and then letting it respond to them.⁷

Denise Sprynskyj & Peter Boyd are fashion designers who have been working under the label *S/X* which they began in 1994. They have a studio based near the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in Melbourne, and lecture in the fashion course at RMIT. They have won numerous awards for their rearrangement of traditional tailoring and their ability to incorporate unusual structural elements creating a fusion between fashion and art.

John Vella is a Hobart artist who is currently Acting Head of Sculpture at the University of Tasmania. Vella has exhibited widely and has worked extensively with members of the community. He has sought to break down traditional hierarchies in art in order to make art more accessible to the general public.

⁷ Interview with Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford on the 17/10/05 by Margaret Baguley at the Turpin Crawford Studio, Sydney.

Geoffrey Ricardo is a well known painter and print maker and has worked with the Victorian Tapestry Workshop on numerous occasions. Ricardo has also exhibited widely and has an established reputation in Australia.

Recording the Interviews

With the participants' permission, all of the interviews were audio recorded so that the tapes could be later transcribed for close analysis. Observational notes were made after the interview because as Fontana and Frey (2005) has noted 'we are beginning to realise that we cannot lift the results of interviews out of the contexts in which they were gathered and claim them as objective data with no strings attached' (pp 716 - 717). The major advantage to recording the interviews was to increase the accuracy of the data collection. Recording also allowed me to be more attentive to the participant. As Patton (1987) stated, trying to take very detailed notes during the interview can result in the pace of the interview becoming very slow and almost non-conversational (p. 137). Silverman (2001) has described the important advantages in using tape recordings and transcripts in qualitative research. The tapes are a public record, and preserve sequences of talk. They can also be replayed and transcripts checked for accuracy during the data analysis process. One of the disadvantages can be that participants can be overly cautious in what they say.

Ethical Issues

This research has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network and has been allocated an ethics reference number of H 0007989. As a requirement of ethics approval an information sheet and consent form had to be given to each of the participants to sign. Informed consent requires the researcher to inform the research participants about the overall purpose of the research, as well as, any possible risks and benefits that may occur from their participation in the project. Informed consent required both voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Prior to the interviews taking place extensive research was undertaken to ascertain who the participants were and how their role in the case study would be of benefit to

the research. This information enabled me to identify the ‘gatekeepers’⁸ from who I would require permission to proceed. In the PHE case study this was the President of each State and Territory Guild, and in the VTW case study it was permission from the Director. The exhibition participants were able to be approached individually through the premise of the POP exhibition. As Kvale (1996) noted issues of who may grant consent may arise in such places as institutions, ‘where a superior’s consent to a study may imply a more or less subtle pressure on employees to participate’ (pp 112 - 113). The only institutional framework this may have applied to was the VTW. However I approached participants individually for permission to participate, rather than assuming the Director had given an overarching directive to the weavers.

Although the embroidery guild members belonged to an organisation, they were volunteers and therefore direction from the President was not a matter for concern.

The informed consent form stated that the individual’s identity will be revealed unless they specifically request this not to occur. During the course of the research, none of the participants made this request. Each of the participants retained a copy of the information sheet which contained contact details should they have wished to withdraw from the research. As a result of my investigations it became apparent that it would be invaluable to include email correspondence from the artists participating in the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition as part of the phenomenological inquiry for this study. It was therefore necessary to submit another ethics form to facilitate this new material. This form was duly sent to the ethics committee and subsequently approved. The email correspondence was then sent to the participants for verification in addition to another information sheet and informed consent form.

Procedure

The Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Tasmania approved my application in July 2004; however before my transfer some of the initial research had already begun with ethics approval from another university.⁹ This did not unduly affect the research outcomes, as both committees were operating under similar

⁸ Gatekeepers is a term used to describe people in positions of responsibility such as principals in schools, who must be persuaded of the value of the research in order to grant access to the participants required for the research.

⁹ The transfer was due to the fact that I had accepted a position as Lecturer in Arts Education at the University of Tasmania which commenced on the 1st of January, 2004.

conditions. I was aware in both cases that research could not commence until this approval had been granted. At this point letters were sent to various participants with the information sheet and informed consent form to explain the research and to seek their involvement. All of the people who were invited to participate in the research accepted.

Recruitment of Participants

The PHE participants were approached, in the first instance, by letter to their respective guilds, and then the President contacted members who had worked on the embroidery. If they had left the guild they were contacted at home to see if they would be willing to participate. For these participants, it was quite a social occasion and an opportunity to reminisce with fellow embroiderers about their contribution to the PHE. As described earlier I approached the Director of the VTW, and then undertook a residency in November/December 2004 during which I interviewed the weavers who were willing to participate in the research. A follow up visit was conducted in November 2005, and in addition to speaking with the weavers, I also interviewed the current Director. Most of the artists were interviewed during November 2005 in Sydney and Melbourne, and December 2005 in Tasmania. Geoffrey Ricardo was interviewed by phone in May 2006, as his participation was considered to be essential after the final selection of art work was made.¹⁰

Withdrawal of Consent

During the course of the research none of the participants withdrew their initial consent.

The Role of the Researcher

Before the research commenced I had no prior connections to any of the participants who were formally interviewed. I worked independently to actively collect all the data. As the researcher in this study I was intimately and actively involved in conducting all the interviews, transcribing them, and sending the transcribed interviews back to the participants so that they could be checked for accuracy of

¹⁰ Ricardo completed the painting upon which the Bairnsdale Tapestry was based. I believed that showing his painting with the tapestry would allow the viewer to see the decisions that the weavers had to make.

meaning. Kvale (1996) raised a number of concerns about the role of the researcher, including that they are the main instrument through which data is collected: 'In the end, however, the integrity of the researcher – his or her honesty and fairness, knowledge, and experience – are the decisive factors' (p. 117). Kvale also noted that the independence of the research can be influenced by participants of the project who wish to be seen in a particular way. If the researcher identifies with them too closely, they may ignore some findings and emphasise others, leading to reporting and interpreting everything from their subject's perspective (p. 118). As far as possible I endeavoured to interview as many people involved in each case study to obtain a rounded view, rather than relying on the perspective and perceptions of one particular group or individual.

Trustworthiness and Credibility

Some of the participants were concerned when reading their transcripts that I had included such elements as pauses, indecisiveness and laughter. Silverman (2001) recommended noting apparently trivial details in audio or video recorded interviews, as it enhances the reliability of the interpretation (p. 33). As Silverman explained, the transcript itself becomes decontextualised from the initial oral discourse:

The transcriptions are detemporalised; a living, ongoing conversation is frozen into a written text. The words of the conversation, fleeting as the steps of an improvised dance, are fixated into static written words, open to repeated public inspections. The words of the transcripts take on a solidity that was not intended in the immediate conversational context. The flow of conversation, with its open horizon of directions and meanings to be followed up, is replaced by the fixated, stable written text (p. 167).

I thought it was important to include the natural pauses and reactions of both the participants and I so that the reader could, to some extent, understand how information was being perceived and constructed. To maintain reliability within interviews Silverman (2001) recommended tape recording all face-to-face interviews, carefully transcribing the tapes, and presenting long extracts of data in the research report (p. 229). The interview transcripts allowed me to ascertain when information was repeated, and therefore verified, by another participant. I also corroborated

information through written documentation such as transcripts of other interviews, catalogues, journals and books. Because textual data has not been filtered by the researcher, Silverman (2001) noted it may be more reliable than observations (p. 229). This strategy was also an effective way of triangulating some of the participants' responses. The participant can only provide their perspective of the information they are providing, and even then this data has been modified and filtered according to a complex array of situational, personal and psychological factors:

Any gaze is always filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race and ethnicity. There are no objective observations, only observations socially situated in the worlds of the observer and the observed. Subjects, or individuals, are seldom able to give full explanations of their actions or intentions; all they can offer are accounts, or stories, about what they did and why. No single method can grasp the subtle variations in ongoing human experience. As a consequence ... qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive methods, always seeking better ways to make more understandable the worlds of experience that have been studied (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 12).

The trustworthiness and credibility of the data has been ensured by providing full transcripts of the correspondence, and noting effects which may have created a different emphasis to what was said.

Data Analysis

In addition to information gained from artefacts and written texts, large amounts of data were generated in this study through the interviews conducted for the PHE, VTW and POP case studies. As the research progressed themes began to emerge, initially from the interviews, related to the process of collaboration. These included the ego of the artist, the multiple interpretations of the word collaboration, the complex nature of collaboration and how participants within collaborative processes are identified in subsequent documentation. Other potential themes were identified emerging from the literature review. These included how collaboration had emerged in the history of art, the motivation for people to engage in collaboration, and what factors contribute to a

successful collaboration. Theories which impacted on the research and which required further investigation to understand the complex nature of collaboration included: Group Theory, Leadership Theory, Management Theory, Gender Theory, Flow Theory, and Communities of Practice.

The analysis of the data focused on emergent themes and recurrent patterns grouped in similar categories. Categories were then identified, coded and analysed in accordance with the research questions, to allow for meaningful interpretation and reporting of the data. There are a number of software programs which have been designed for use in qualitative research to assist in searching for words and phrases in order to code data. This research has utilised QSR N6 software. It is based on three tools: the Coders, Text Search and Node Search, which in turn operated on two complementary sets of data. These are the document system, which holds all the documentary data and research notes, and the node system which represents all the topics and categories that are important to the research project (*N6 Reference Guide*, 2002, p. 3). The program searches for links among the codes and 'build(s) a hierarchical network of code patterns, categories and relationships in the original data' in addition to being able to 'code data in more than one way to provide multiple perspectives and enable change in codes to be effected as a deeper understanding of the data emerges' (Burns, 2000, p. 437).

Data were initially coded manually through the phenomenological inquiry method, described earlier in this chapter, which used significant statements, formulated meanings and categories to code the data. The following categories were created from this method: Characteristics of Collaboration; Skills & Expertise; Working Processes; Leadership; Support; Motivation to Engage in Collaboration; Prior Relationship; Gender; Identity; Inspiration; and the Enigmatic Nature of Collaboration. These categories were used as initial nodes in the QSR N6 software. Node searches revealed additional categories which were identified as: Communication; Audience; Philosophy; Responsibility; Third Entity; Background; Social Time; Participants; Ego; and the group stages of Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing. Coding the information from the interviews and email correspondence into these nodes enabled important and insightful links to be made, regarding the collaborative process. The participants made clear connections between four common themes

which linked to the collaborative process. These were: Leadership, Communication, Skills & Expertise and Support interlinked to the creation of a Third Entity, which they identified as the work they were creating. The analysis of the data revealed why people engage in collaboration, identified the key factors in successful collaborative practice, and determined why collaboration is re-emerging in contemporary society.

Case Study: The Parliament House Embroidery (PHE)

My interest in the Parliament House Embroidery (PHE) began during a visit to Canberra several years ago. I was interested to read that the PHE had been embroidered by each of the Australian State and Territory Guilds, as a gift to the people of Australia for the opening of Parliament House in 1988. I was surprised that I had not heard about it, as it was a monumental piece of work measuring sixteen metres in length and sixty five centimetres in width. Further investigations revealed that a small book had been published about the embroidery titled *The Work of Many Hands*, which detailed the origins and journey of the work itself. This book was a collaborative effort between the state supervisors and was published by the Parliament House Embroidery Committee. The sheer magnitude of this project and the fact that it had been a complex communication exercise relying on letters, telephone, and air travel before the advent of email and cheaper airfares, revealed it to be a rich source of data. A great deal of this documentation was archived at the National Library in Canberra, which I was able to access during June/July 2004. Many of the audiotapes from the guild supervisor's conferences were transferred to CD ROM for my research, and were provided on short term loan. In addition, I was able to contact and interview the majority of state and territory supervisors of the PHE, as well as some of the other members. In order to ensure the embroidery would meet the highest standards required for a public art project, the guilds and the Parliament House Authority decided to conduct a competition for artists to submit a design proposal for the PHE. The successful design was created by Kay Lawrence now Professor at the School of Art – University of South Australia, who I have also corresponded with and interviewed. The length of time and extensive documentation, in addition to still being able to access some of the original participants, were all strong reasons to include this project as a case study.

Data Gathering

When I first began researching the Parliament House Embroidery I discovered that there were nineteen boxes and three folios of information, including videotapes and audiotapes, stored at the National Library in Canberra¹¹. I spent seven days in June/July 2004 going through the boxes, making extensive notes and photocopying significant manuscripts for the research. I also obtained a copy of the publication specifically about the PHE titled *The Work of Many Hands* (1988). This led to identification of the supervisors from each of the State and Territory Guilds concerned with the project. I then wrote to each of the Embroidery Guilds in each State and Territory asking for permission to use information from the archives for research purposes. After some further investigation I discovered that the Northern Territory Embroidery Guild is now defunct, although I was able to establish phone and written contact with the supervisor who was in charge at the time. Geographical distance and time constraints has prevented personal visits to the WA, NSW and NT guilds, however this was overcome by obtaining data through phone interviews, letters and emails.

I then interviewed existing supervisors and members of the Guilds who worked on the embroidery itself and who were willing and able to attend an interview on the nominated day. This was difficult as many of the women were in their forties or fifties at the time of the PHE, and were now approaching their sixties and seventies. On the whole the members were very proud of their contribution to what they describe as a piece of history, and were quite forthcoming in the interviews.

¹¹ The records of the Parliament house Embroidery Committee were donated to the National Library of Australia by the former Convenor of the Committee in June and December 1991. The collection labelled MS 8369 is available for research purposes and comprises correspondence, financial records, minutes, diaries and notebooks, newspaper cuttings, mounting notes, fabric samples, printed materials, computer disks, photographs, slides and audio and video tapes. The records relate to liaison between the Committee and the State guilds and guild supervisors; fundraising projects and grant applications; public relations; selection and execution of the winning design; conservation of the embroidery; the production of the publication *The Parliament House Embroidery: a work of many hands* (1988) and relations between the Committee and other organisations and individuals including the architects of the new Parliament House, the Australian Bicentennial Authority, the Parliament House Construction Authority and the Patron, Lady Stephen (*MS8369 Records of the Parliament House Embroidery Committee*).

Case Study: The Victorian Tapestry Workshop (VTW)

The Victorian Tapestry Workshop (VTW) in South Melbourne, Australia, was the basis of the second case study, and has both a national and international reputation for its excellent standards in tapestry weaving. The VTW began in 1976 and still operates today with skilled weavers who are also trained and qualified artists. Economically the workshop has to run as a business. The comparison between the PHE and the VTW allowed me to compare and contrast the voluntary basis of the guilds and the business nature of the VTW. Given that the majority of embroiderers have not been trained in formal art qualifications, also provided an interesting link, which will be explored further in chapter five. Although there have been a number of texts published about the Victorian Tapestry Workshop, these publications have predominately been written by the VTW. In the publications the VTW strongly emphasised the collaborative nature of the workshop.

Data Gathering

My initial introduction to the Victorian Tapestry Workshop was through a formal letter I sent to Sue Walker the Director in early February, 2004 in which I briefly outlined the study. I asked if it was possible to meet with her, and to visit the workshop. Later that month I spoke with Walker about the possibility of conducting an ethnographic study of the weavers. During the conversation it became clear that the weavers would not be comfortable with this. Another researcher had previously conducted an ethnographic study on the weavers as part of her university course studies, and they felt that her presence in the workshop was quite intrusive. Walker said that she would speak to the Director Elect about the possibility of an ethnographic study. Later that day she said they both felt that pure observation from the viewing platform would be the most appropriate approach. I knew this would provide an inadequate, artificial and limited view of the workshop considering the type of data I needed to collect. Referring to my field notes from this day I wrote: 'I felt a little uneasy at this point, as I think my request had generated some ill feeling, although Sue was very gracious about it.' Fortunately, a few weeks later, we reached a compromise when I was invited to submit an expression of interest to be an artist in residence at the VTW. This took place towards the end of the year during a three week period from 15 November to 3 December.

Case Study: Partnership or Perish? A study of artistic collaborations (POP)

The third case study involved the selection of contemporary artists, who have been publicly acknowledged as working collaboratively, for the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition. They were initially sent a letter outlining the details of the exhibition. This was then followed up by emails and telephone calls to maintain the flow of communication, until I was able to undertake studio visits in October 2005. The purpose of the visits was to discuss the collaborative nature of the work, and if available, to photograph the type of work they would exhibit. The curatorial role allowed me to experience their collaborative process as both a participant-observer and collaborative leader in my role as curator.

Data Gathering

Each of the artists selected for this exhibition was sent a letter of invitation in October 2004, outlining the premise of the exhibition and detailed information such as the type of gallery and the dates during which the work would be shown. This communication process resulted in three artists, whose work, for financial and logistical reasons could not be accepted. I personally visited the other artists who had been contacted and met some in their studios and others in their homes during October 2005. The purpose of the visits was to discuss potential work for the exhibition and in some cases to view the work for the exhibition. I also needed to ascertain whether their work was collaborative in nature. During these visits I interviewed the artists about their collaborative process and emphasised this aspect as an integral part of the exhibition.

Conclusion

The case study methodology and phenomenological inquiry utilised for this study was appropriate, given the human interaction required in the collaborative process. The process of collaboration has been acknowledged as being quite complex, and a number of factors needed to be considered when investigating this practice. Case study was chosen because of its ability to generate both unique, and universal understandings through focussing on complex human situations and human encounters (Simons, 1996). MacDonald and Walker (1975) stated that the characteristics of both the artist and the scientist were necessary for case study research.

Case study is the way of the artist, who achieves greatness when, through the portrayal of a single instance locked in time and circumstance, [he] communicates enduring truths about the human condition. For both the scientist and artist, content and intent emerge in form (p. 3).

The case studies seek to provide the reader with a greater understanding of the collaborative process, as it was experienced by the participants. The phenomenological inquiry provides insights into the collaborative process and how it was experienced by the participants. The participants, in all of the case studies articulated that collaborative processes were essential to the desired outcome. John-Steiner (2000) has argued that women were more at ease with interdependent modes of work such as collaborative processes, and as such, may be advantaged when working in groups (p. 100). Another area which needed to be considered was the perception of art making, as the first two case studies are from the discipline of textiles. Contemporary conceptual concerns regarding notions and definitions of art and craft are forcing a re-contextualisation of the aesthetic value of craft (Chadwick, 1996; Dormer, 1994, 1997; McGrath, 2002; Rowley, 1989; Shiner, 2001; Walker, 1996; Weltge, 1998). The data for the case studies was collected through interviews, diaries, texts, catalogues and artefacts, to maximise the information utilised in this study.

By describing the methods undertaken to gather the data for the research, it was hoped to demonstrate that the information gathered from the case studies was trustworthy and credible. The qualitative data from the interviews was analysed using QSR N6 computer software to categorise and merge groupings to determine similarities and dissimilarities within the case studies. Groupings of the data, under the various categories, were retrieved by using the Text Search function. This enabled all of the material from the categories to be seen together and analysed in terms of the research questions.

The next three chapters consist of the Parliament House Embroidery (PHE), the Victorian Tapestry Workshop (VTW) and the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition case studies. Each case study provides the reader with a description of the group or entity involved. The group stages of forming, norming, storming and performing were

utilised, in order to emphasise the importance of group dynamics, in relation to the collaborative process. In addition to the collaborative process, participants' responses have also been sought in relation to issues concerned with gender and acknowledgment. The interviews and emails were also utilised, to provide a phenomenological essence, or fundamental structure, of the collaborative process as experienced by the participants.

Chapter 5: Case Study - Parliament House Embroidery (PHE)

The Parliament House Embroidery, although a key commissioned work in Parliament House, was the only gift accepted by the Parliament House Construction Authority's Art Advisory Committee.¹ The embroidery was created by each state and territory guild in Australia. The designers, of the then to be constructed Parliament House, believed that art and craft works should be incorporated into the building itself. The firm Mitchell, Giurgola and Thorp Architects, and specifically Romaldo Giurgola and Pamille Berg provided 'the philosophical base for the incorporation of artworks within the building, as well as much of the practical method for their selection, commissioning, fabrication and installation (Cochrane, 1992, p. 344).²

Forming

On 10 of February, 1980, Dorothy Hyslop conceived the idea of gifting an embroidery to the new Parliament House and wrote to the President of the ACT Embroiderers' Guild noting that although eight years would be a short time to plan and execute such a monumental work, 'many of the embroiderers would find it exciting and it would give great impetus to the status of embroidery' (PHEC, 1988, p. 1). A letter was duly sent to the chairman of the Joint House Standing Committee with the offer of creating a gift, from the people of Australia, for the new Parliament House using embroidery as the primary technique. An enthusiastic reply was sent accepting the gift by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Sir Billy Snedden and the President of the Senate, Sir Condor Laucke, who felt that the proposal was like 'a breath of fresh air' (PHEC, 1988, p. 1).

The Parliament House Embroidery Committee (PHEC) was formed by the ACT Guild on 27 October, 1980. The ACT Guild wrote to all of the state and territory embroidery guilds in Australia seeking their participation in such a project, to which most of the

¹ The symbolic reason for this is that the PHE represented the people of Australia who were involved in its actual creation.

² Mitchell, Giurgola and Thorp Architects worked extensively with the Parliament House Construction Authority, and curator Katrina Rumley to engage with eighty commissions to artists and craftspeople, resulting in the acquisition of almost three thousand works for the building with a total budget of \$13 million dollars for the opening of Parliament House, Canberra in 1988.

guilds replied favourably.³ Dorothy Hyslop was appointed Convenor for the Parliament House Embroidery from 1980 till its completion and installation at new Parliament House in 1988. During 4-5 May, 1981, initial meetings were held with the Guilds' representatives to begin research into fabric and threads. Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania were represented with New South Wales, the Northern Territory and Victorian representatives unable to attend. The decisions and plans made at this meeting were sent to the architects of the new Parliament House, Mitchell, Giurgola & Thorp, who had asked to be kept informed of the progress of the PHE. The principal design architect, Romaldo Giurgola ensured that collaboration and discussion with the artists and architects commenced early in the project, six years before the official opening. Giurgola described this process as:

... work [ing] with the artists and craftspersons so that their vision and our conceptions can act as catalysts for each other, producing spaces, surfaces and works of art which are mutually responsive to, rather than silently exclusive of, each other (Renwick, 1986, p. 44)

Late in 1982 Pamille Berg, from the New York office of Mitchell, Giurgola & Thorp was appointed as the Art and Craft Coordinator for the new Parliament House. In November of the same year the PHEC submitted an outline of how the project was to be managed as well as sending the cost estimates to the Parliament House Construction Authority. On 25 November, 1983, Dorothy Hyslop sent a letter, to Romaldo Giurgola, which outlined certain expectations for the future of the project, including how the guild would manage the project:

The design of the piece is of utmost importance and the designer must have knowledge of embroidery. The degree of success in all commemorative embroideries we have studied is most closely related to the design of the pieces. With the help of the Crafts Board and the Australian Crafts Council we are confident that a designer and supervisor will be found who can undertake the work of designing and realising the embroidery. The stitchery will be each embroiderer's personal

³ For various reasons the Western Australian guild took some time before it became involved in the project.

contribution without fee. An approach has been made to the Parliament House Construction Authority for financial assistance towards fees and fares for a designer and a supervisor and for the cost of mounting the piece in the building. We hope to be able to provide for fabrics and threads and administration from the resources of the Guilds.⁴

This formal articulation of expectations from Hyslop was typical of the forming stage, described by Tuckman (1965). The similarly formal response from Romaldo Giurgola clearly reflected his belief that all of the projects to be considered would be professionally evaluated against the master-plan for the building, and the Guilds would not be working independently of this plan:

... as you certainly realise, the selection, design and placement of works of art and craft within the building is a matter which demands much care and thought. No work of art can be planned for the Parliament House without careful interrelation between its forms or furnishings to be used in the room where the artwork will be placed. Furthermore, decisions on disbursement of funds available to subsidise production of art and craft work for the building must be made not on a “piece-meal” basis, but rather according to a co-ordinated plan for embellishment of the building as a whole... the Guild’s submission can be carefully considered with discussion of an appropriate form and function for the embroidery, selection of a designer through recommendations from the Crafts Board or other appropriate agencies, and budgeting for the project.⁵

As indicated by these contacts it was clear that the ACT Guild, of which Dorothy Hyslop was the convenor, had a substantially different perception of the theme for the embroidery. At a committee meeting in November 1980, they recorded in the minutes an acknowledgement that a professional, with an understanding of embroidery, would have charge of the design; but before this step could be taken a theme would need to be decided. The theme suggested was ‘The People who made Australia’:

⁴ Letter from Dorothy Hyslop to Romaldo Giurgola, dated 25/11/83, NLA, NS8369 Series 12, Folder 63.

⁵ Letter from Romaldo Giurgola to Dorothy Hyslop, undated, NLA, MS8369 Series 12, Folder 63.

Because this embroidery will be undertaken to commemorate two hundred years of European settlement in Australia, the Great South Land, many Europeans will be portrayed, but also the earlier and later Asian and Pacific migrations. Within this theme, we see many possibilities of including both ethnic costume as well as characteristically ethnic embroideries. Throughout its total length we can imagine Australian flora and fauna being incorporated in the visual narrative of actual, preferably lesser-known events which are part of our social history. In the detailed selection of significant episodes, we would expect each State Guild to decide and document their choice by reference to photographs or contemporary prints.⁶

One of the inherent difficulties in this monumental community art project was that the majority of embroiderers were not artists, but highly skilled craft workers. Dorothy Hyslop noted, in the same committee meeting, that if a professional designer were not employed the design could be labelled banal and ‘might turn out as monotonous as School Projects on Open Day, hence the need for original research into such sources as local history, family journals and letters’ [Emphasis in original]. A document titled ‘Intended Design for Embroidery for the new and permanent Parliament House’ from the ACT Embroiderers’ Guild described the design as follows:

The borders will depict, among other things, symbols, Coats of Arms, flora and fauna. The central portion will contain some of the history, geography and activities suggested by each State. It is important that the work should have artistic integrity and the designer will of course be expected to exercise creative capacity. Our brief to the designer will be that the design is to be representational rather than abstract.⁷

In April, 1983, the Construction Authority provided funds for the first stage of the Parliament House Embroidery in order to select a designer. The PHE Committee

⁶ Embroiderers’ Guild ACT Committee Meeting, 7/11/80, convenor Dorothy Hyslop.

⁷ ACT Embroiderers’ Guild, ‘Intended design for Embroidery for the New and Permanent Parliament House’. Unpublished manuscript, 20/5/81, NLA, MS8369, Folder 1, Box 1.

invited each of the States and Territories to send their recommendations. The names of twelve artists were then forwarded to the Committee for consideration. A brief for the competition was prepared by Pamille Berg in November 1983. Six designers were then invited to submit design proposals for the Embroidery. The embroidery guilds nominated three people, and the Crafts Board of Australia also nominated three people. The final selection of designers for the PHE consisted of: Dawn De Vere, Kay Lawrence, Ruth Stoneley, Annemieke Mein, Alvena Hall and Mary Beetson. The artists' submissions were due in May, 1984. A report does exist in the archives which evaluates each of the designs, however it had been decided at the time that this report would remain confidential due to potential legal implications.⁸ The design by Adelaide artist and tapestry weaver Kay Lawrence was chosen unanimously, by the Committee, and was considered to be:

... the most outstanding of all submitted, admirably fulfilling aesthetic and practical requirements. It was agreed that her work showed a flair and imagination in interpreting the theme of the brief. In terms of design, profundity of concept, expression and sensibility of treatment, it is envisaged the finished work will be of significance and most appropriate for the Reception Hall first floor gallery.⁹

However, the fact that Lawrence was not an embroiderer, initially, did cause discontent amongst some of the embroidery guild members:

A lot of controversy erupted when it became clear that this embroidered panel, which was supposed to be a gift of the Embroiderers' Guilds of Australia was not designed by a member of our field, but that an Artist was commissioned for this work. I guess pride and protectiveness of skills play a role in all crafts.¹⁰

⁸ *Parliament House Embroidery – Six First Stage Designs*, NLA, MS8369, Folder 46, Box 7 and letter dated 2/7/84 from Katrina Rumley of the Parliament House Construction Authority to Dorothy Hyslop.

⁹ Report on the Sub Committee Meeting to Select a Design for the Reception Hall Embroidery Commission, 14/6/84, NLA, MS8369, Folder 46, Box 7.

¹⁰ Embroiderers' Guild of Queensland Report on the Parliament House Embroidery, September 1986, NLA, MS8369, Series 1/3, Folder 9, States Qld.

The Parliament House Embroidery Committee minutes of 4 December, 1984, revealed that the Guild was somewhat surprised to hear about the amount of work to be directed by Lawrence, and by the news that she was to appoint the National Coordinator. The PHEC minutes noted that a good deal of forward planning had taken place by the Parliament House Construction Authority without consultation with the Parliament House Embroidery Committee. Dorothy Hyslop and Jacki Marsh arranged to meet and discuss this matter with Pamille Berg and Katrina Rumley. This perceived lack of communication was swiftly pointed out to the Parliament House Construction Authority. The incorrect handling of this issue would have resulted in the embroidery being seen as another commissioned work for new Parliament House, instead of a gift to and from the Australian people.

The subsequent meeting with Ian Fowler, Pamille Berg and Katrina Rumley resulted in an assurance that the Guilds would retain decision making responsibility on the questions of embroidery technique, and that Kay Lawrence's employment was as a designer, and in this capacity she would maintain the standard of the work. The minutes also recorded another member saying that if Lawrence was to have so much authority then she could also handle the finance. The same member also noted that if this occurred it would mean the guilds would have no more decision making functions during the creation of the PHE. This stage traversed both the forming and storming stages described by Gibson and Hodgetts (1991) and resulted in tension, as the embroidery guild members tried to assert and define their roles and responsibilities and create a special place in the project for themselves. The issue which confronted Lawrence was the potential conflict between meeting the expectations of the architects and the embroiderers. On reflection it appeared that the embroiderers wished to produce a work which showcased their mastery of complex embroidery stitches, and would involve as many embroiderers as possible. The forming stage of the PHE involved many stakeholders, including most of the state and territory guilds of Australia. It was a critical time for many people to establish their leadership role and formalise communication networks within the project.

Storming

During the storming stage when people were trying to find their role, issues began to develop between some of the guild members and the national coordinator Anne

Richards. In November, 1985, and with recommendations from the guilds, Anne Richards from Melbourne was appointed the National Coordinator due to her embroidery expertise, and for her 'ability to get on with people'.¹¹ Lawrence noted in her diary that some members had rejected Richards' authority, and 'didn't respect her right to give them technical advice, and while they may have listened, they didn't act on it.'¹² Although Lawrence had envisioned the role of designer and coordinator as being complementary, it appeared that some embroidery guild members deferred instead to Lawrence's authority:

It's odd but I think that there's a slight tendency for the state guilds to resent Anne's presence – not her personally, but because she's not the designer, that her word doesn't carry as much weight, that they'd rather my opinion!!! It's a structural difficulty in a project of this size and complexity. She's been invaluable in her support but it's extraordinarily difficult for her to step into my shoes and discuss the interpretation with authority.¹³

This statement suggested that the guild members were perhaps more comfortable with a hierarchical form of leadership and found it difficult to work with the facilitative leadership role that Lawrence encouraged:

I sense a little reluctance to accept Anne's authority – this has surfaced in a few states now, and makes it very difficult. I suppose as I'm retaining ultimate say over what's right or not, then there's a natural desire to get my opinion and not give Anne's opinion too much weight till I've confirmed what she says. It does make it very tricky. Perhaps I should have set up the process a bit differently so she did have absolute responsibility for some areas of the interpretation. But I can't see how I could do that easily [Emphasis in original].¹⁴

¹¹ Letter to Marjorie Beck from Dorothy Hyslop, 24/8/84, NLA, MS8396, Series 1/1 Folder 3.

¹² Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 2/10/86

¹³ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 15/1/87

¹⁴ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 9/2/87.

One factor could have been that Lawrence had a well established reputation as an artist, when she won the design competition in 1984. Lawrence had started her professional career as a painter and printmaker, but later changed her emphasis from painting to textiles. In 1977 she studied in the United Kingdom and Europe, spending four months studying tapestry at the Edinburgh College of Art. In 1981 Lawrence coordinated community tapestry projects in Adelaide, and during 1983 she wove an eight and a half square metre tapestry titled *Two Hills - Two Years* for the Australian High Commission in Dacca, Bangladesh. To some of the embroiderers Lawrence represented the conceptual/artistic side of the embroidery design and Richards the skill/craft aspect. Although both women were highly regarded in their respective fields, there was an ingrained perception that art was valued more highly than craft, and perhaps this also contributed to some of the members' attitudes.¹⁵

The completed embroidery design was sixteen metres long by sixty five centimetres high and had been designed and constructed as eight separate panels. This allowed each State and Territory Embroiderer's Guilds to stitch an embroidery section, before it was finally joined and hung as one piece. The final division of the Parliament House Embroidery into eight parts reading from left to right is outlined below:

State	Name of image	Design grouping
ACT 2000 x 650mm	First landscape Petroglyph <i>Possum Dreaming</i> Lake Eyre	Aboriginal response to the land
Queensland 2000 x 650mm	Aboriginal tribal map Gerler map Military map	European response: mapping the land
Tasmania 2000 x 650mm	Glover's cottage Strzelecki Range Letter from Mary Thomas William Allen Pioneer and wife	The dream and the reality
South Australia 2000 x 650mm	Autumn Winter Spring Summer	Changes to the land: clearing and fencing seasons
New South Wales 2865 x 650mm	Mitchell grass Wheat Sheep Landscape Potoroo	Changes to the land European agriculture

¹⁵ Of course other factors such as personality, prior relationships and social context can also contribute to the success or failure of such relationships.

Northern Territory 1218 x 650mm	Plant pests Sam Byrne's <i>Hungry Rabbits</i>	Changes to the land: introduced pests
Victoria 2235 x 650mm	Pioneer implements Town Shopkeeper Contractors Woman with a cradle Miner	Growth of the towns Growth of industry: mining
Western Australia 1770 x 650mm	Mining scene Second landscape	Growth of industry: mining Reaffirmation of the land

Table 14: Overview of the State and Territory sections in the Parliament House Embroidery

Lawrence was aware of the necessity for close communication with the embroiderers, who were volunteers during their time on the project. At the time, Meredith Hinchliffe (1986) wrote that the design was definitely not traditional and had raised concern amongst some embroiderers. Hinchliffe further noted that Lawrence felt it was an advantage that she was not an embroiderer, as she was not constrained by what the embroiderers were capable of. 'Undoubtedly, this made the task of Guild members more difficult, particularly as many had not previously interpreted the design of others' (Hinchliffe, 1986). Dorothy Hyslop confirmed this in her statement: 'We are more confident of Guilds' craftsmanship than of their designing capacity.'¹⁶ Information from the archives seemed to support Hyslop's initial perception, yet the archives also reveal how much the embroiderers learned during the process of working on the PHE: 'the embroiderers extended themselves much more than with traditional design.'¹⁷

Lawrence undertook three months of intensive research with historian Margaret Allen, who drew up a reading list for her of relevant texts to the project. As Lawrence recalled she was surprised to discover the extent to which the landscape, we take for granted as 'natural and untouched,' has been altered by human intervention. She decided to use these alterations to the land as a metaphor for the development of European settlement in Australia. Lawrence achieved this through depicting modifications made to the land, structures that had been built, and plants and animals that were introduced. Perhaps most importantly, Lawrence did not depict each of the states and territories as a separate entity, but rather endeavoured to capture the

¹⁶ Embroiderers' Guild ACT Committee Meeting, 7/11/80, NLA, MS8396, Series 1/1, Folder 1, Box 1.

¹⁷ Notes available to the public during display of completed panels, NLA, MS8396, Series 1/2, Folder 5, Section 5, page 10.

common experience of settlement by referencing images from all over Australia. 'I tried to get away from the stereotypes that are often used to characterise the different States and Territories' (PHEC, 1988, p. 7). Lawrence discovered the design was developing into a series of opposites being held in an uneasy balance, which she resolved as a series of distant views and close-ups in monochrome and colour which gave a rhythmic flow to the embroidery. 'It can only be seen as a 'whole' through walking along its length, a time based experience rather like watching a film.'¹⁸

Lawrence visited all the guilds in 1985 to both discuss her design and to organise the guilds for their stitching of their samples. In a letter to Dorothy Hyslop, Lawrence outlined the importance of discussing the process of interpreting the design and the complementary role of designer and co-ordinator(s). She believed that the project would be more effective if each state or territory could organise its own co-ordinator, and was aware of the importance of communication between all the participants:

As the project will encompass many hundreds of people each with their differing skills and views, it seems essential to make communication as direct as possible between myself and the state and territory guilds. While I don't want to take on the responsibility of overseeing the whole project in all its complexity I am concerned about my responsibility for the interpretation and would like to devise a coordinator/designer relationship that facilitates my direct contact with the state guilds to discuss interpretation, while handing over responsibility for the day to day running of the project. One idea that came to mind which I mentioned in my letter to Katrina, was for the states to each appoint their own coordinator rather than having one overall co-ordinator. The state coordinators would be responsible for all the State organisation and liaison and act as embroidery advisors. I could alternate my visits to the states with their visits to me either in Adelaide or Canberra. This would have the advantage of ensuring more direct communication between myself and the state guilds but would also enable representatives from each of the states to meet regularly to discuss the embroidery and make

¹⁸ Email from Professor Kay Lawrence to Margaret Baguley 7/10/04.

contact with each other, and gain an overall understanding of the project, rather than focusing only on their own area.¹⁹ [Emphasis in original].

This was an important recommendation as it became necessary for Lawrence to develop a devolved form of leadership, particularly, given the geographical distances involved. Lawrence's proposal resulted in the appointment of state and territory guild supervisors, who were able to disseminate her feedback to the embroidery guild members of that particular state or territory.

At this stage in her career, Lawrence was known as a tapestry weaver and had deliberately 'put off thinking about how the design would be interpreted into embroidery until I had completed it' (PHEC, 1988, p. 8). She felt confident that the embroiderers' skills would be able to retain the qualities of the original drawing and was convinced she would be able to develop a close collaborative relationship during this process:

Rather than trying to suggest, with my limited knowledge, which embroidery techniques should be used in the work, I thought this practical side should be developed in close collaboration with the guilds. By using their skills and experience in experimenting on samplers, and by trying out different ways of embroidering each image, we could decide together which embroidery techniques worked best. I knew this collaboration would be crucial to the overall success of the project (PHEC, 1988, p. 9).

This process, therefore, required numerous meetings with various guilds in order for Lawrence to explain her design and the reasons behind the narrative she created. She was aware that the design would have to provide enough scope to allow for many different embroiderers to work on it:

I deliberately used a variety of styles, I suppose to express a variety of types of experience that the settlers would have had, and also to make it easier to embroider. Because if you are asking people all over the country

¹⁹ Letter from Kay Lawrence to Dorothy Hyslop. Adelaide, SA: NLA, MS8369 Series 1/1, Folder 2, Box 1.

with very, very different experiences and skills to make the same kind of piece it's better to have different sorts of images so the differences in styles won't be too apparent.²⁰

Lawrence was now deeply into the storming stage of the project, where members of the group were trying to find their own place and to question her decisions. She was not, however, prepared for some of the reactions to her design from the guild members, which were recorded in her personal diary kept throughout the project. It must be understood, in this context, that Lawrence was presenting the design for an artwork which was far removed from the types of designs that many of the guild members had embroidered to that point. The guild members had been used to clearly defined patterns without blurred edges which required limited interpretation. As Bottrell (1972) noted: 'Sensibility is an area in which artists feel at ease, but in which scholars and interpreters often find themselves lost. The artist is not usually compelled to explain or convey his or her point of view' (p. 4). In this case however, Lawrence spent a great deal of time travelling Australia to discuss her design and instituting clear communication between the various guilds. She felt it was important for the members to understand the significance of the images she had chosen and their juxtapositions on the PHE.

During a meeting with the Canberra Guild on 8 May, 1985, Lawrence explained her concept and then asked for questions. One woman leapt to her feet and said the design presented a negative view of the Australian environment, when it should be celebrating it. Lawrence responded that there were celebratory parts, but thought she had been fair to the early history of settlement in Australia by representing both aspects. The same woman then rebuked Lawrence for including the Sam Byrne painting of the rabbit plague, which was a naïve image depicted from a child's view (Appendix 1G). Lawrence replied that it was important to this devastating event, however did not succeed in convincing the woman. Lawrence stood firm with the integrity of her design and concluded by saying that she 'stood by the rabbits.' Everyone laughed, relieving a rather stressful situation. At this point her diary records:

²⁰ Interview by Marilyn Chakley, 1/3/80, ACT, NLA, MS 8369, CD ROM: TRC157/0019/0000 Disc 1 of 1, Duration: 22' 02".

It was interesting that my design obviously threatened some of their notions about the land and its use. I suppose I didn't anticipate such negativity but I handled it quite well, not taking it personally, saying that in the end it was my view and I couldn't expect everyone to agree. A couple of people did say how interesting they thought it was and were very positive – redressed the balance somewhat. I was glad that it provoked strong reactions – at least they weren't indifferent but I'm realising just what sort of conservatism I'll be up against.²¹

Eventually Supervisors for each state and territory guild were chosen, and newsletters began in May, 1985, to keep all of the guilds informed of each other's progress. On 11 April, 1985, Lawrence's diary records that she needed to devise a strategy for one of the guild meetings to outline how she needed to control the interpretation of the design into embroidery. She noted that it would also be important to maintain close and direct contact with the embroiderers, particularly during the sampler stages. The next day during a meeting with the architects of Parliament House and the representative guild members, she began to feel that the guild members were beginning to understand the project and this, in addition to the appointment of the National Co-ordinator, made them less defensive about the design and her role in the process. Initially it appeared, embroiderers thought they would be given the design and would then be working on it independently. Other embroiderers felt the work would be a fairly routine process. This was demonstrated in a revealing comment by one of the state guild supervisors, who noted that they would probably finish their piece very quickly and could then offer assistance to the other States.²² Some of the embroiderers were able to comprehend the process required to undertake their section of the embroidery easily and were able to move through their own forming and storming stages more rapidly, whilst for others it took a little longer.

Lawrence records that one of the state supervisors wanted her members to at first, respond to the design in their own way, and then later to work more directly from the image. The same supervisor also said that the guild members should not feel restricted

²¹ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence, 8/5/85.

²² Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 12/5/85.

to one area of the design, but could range across it if they wished, trying sections and different ways of interpretation.²³ Although in theory this procedure allowed for a variety of approaches, it did create a false impression in some guilds that the design for the embroidery could be changed. Instead of closely following the design and using their extensive skills to find solutions to surface effects, some members unnecessarily utilised complex stitchery without consideration of the overall effect of the embroidery. Although the PHE was a work of many hands, the result was required to have a unified feel and look.

Anne [Richards] said that some of the (deleted) embroiderers criticise the embroidery because it looks like my design – ‘they should have just put up Kay’s design.’ I suppose their notion of interpretation must be quite different to mine, they’d have a much looser idea of interpretation and no doubt don’t understand the necessity of a close interpretation of the overall form to ensure that the integrity of the overall design isn’t lost [Emphasis in original].²⁴

Another guild member anecdotally confided that there were some members who created their own designs, and probably felt a certain ‘artistic licence’ when interpreting Lawrence’s design. However, as awareness grew of the overall effect of the design, the state and territory guilds began to work more effectively together and were able to see how different sections complemented one another.

In addition to problems regarding the extent of interpretation, Lawrence also had to deal with initial disinterest and a lack of understanding about what the PHE symbolised. She noted in her diary that there was no effort to get people to one of the meetings and an embroidery tutor would not even consider the idea of starting their class an hour later so that members could attend a meeting. ‘... they don’t seem to be very well organised and don’t really seem to realise that being organised could be quite critical if the project is to be a success!!!!’²⁵ During a discussion with one of the guilds Lawrence noted that there were some interesting comments made such as using

²³ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 13/5/85.

²⁴ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 28/1/87

²⁵ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 21/5/85

patchwork which she had not considered, but was willing to explore. She also noted paranoia about the depiction of that state in the embroidery which they felt was minimal. Lawrence responded that it was the ‘process of settlement that applied to the whole country rather than the particular regions’²⁶ [Emphasis in original]. At this point in Lawrence’s diary she reached a stage where she started to question the design, because it was being challenged by the people whom she needed to form a close association with:

Sometimes when I look at the design I’m aware of its inadequacies. Some parts are good, others could have been tightened up – perhaps I’ll just have to really look at it in July before the next trips and really consider if I can improve it. Perhaps using the sheep and wheat to refer to the pastoral industry is banal??? But you have to generalise. It’s not possible to include all the complexities²⁷ [Emphasis in original].

Another diary entry recorded that Lawrence was very conscious of the guild’s responses, because she wanted them to approve of her design: ‘I suppose I feel partly responsible for the interpretation and want confirmation that I’d made the right decisions.’²⁸ This statement indicated that Lawrence wanted the members to approve of the design, because if they did so, it would mean, that they would feel greater sense of ownership and therefore would understand the importance of what they were embroidering.

On Tuesday 28 May, 1985, Lawrence attended another state embroidery guild and was met by only twenty people. It now became apparent to Lawrence that some of the guilds did not realise neither the complexity of the project nor how she wished to work with them:

They just have no idea of the scope of the project or the importance of this talk to set the scene for the whole project until they actually hear me speak. I must contact all the other guilds by phone and explain how

²⁶ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 28/5/85

²⁷ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 28/5/85

²⁸ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence, 29/11/86

critical it is that I do have direct contact with as many people as possible. Despite the small number of people it went over well and I think they got the idea – they certainly began to realise just how complex and demanding a project it will be. I must ring Dorothy [Hyslop] and Anne [Richards] and talk to them both in detail and try to iron out some of the communication problems²⁹ [Emphasis in original].

A more rewarding contrast awaited Lawrence at another state guild where she noted the talk was very successful, and was pleasantly surprised by their warmth and interest. The guild reiterated that her explanation of the design was very important, in relation to their understanding of it, and she left feeling inspired to deal with the ‘backlog of work in relation to the other States!!!’³⁰ Lawrence’s visit to another state guild was also successful with sixty five people attending the meeting. The perceived negativity of the design was discussed at this meeting, but once again Lawrence pointed out the need to be truthful to history. The state supervisor appeared to be more experienced in organising projects, but Lawrence was concerned that she might try to take over the panel without discussion with the other embroiderers:

I made reference to people responding individually to the design and especially during the first stage of samplers, experimenting with all sorts of interpretations. She’s very sharp so I know she’d pick up all my meaning but I think she’d have trouble downplaying her desire to influence ... and it may not be a bad thing as I know she’ll make sure it’s done and done properly. My concern is about the quality of the interpretation but then if I can communicate with her I know she’ll make sure my wishes are carried out³¹ [Emphasis in original].

On August 31, 1985, Lawrence met with the architects in Canberra who were very enthusiastic about her the approach and the episodic and fragmentary nature of the PHE design. After the support she received from the architects Lawrence’s diary entry

²⁹ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 28/5/85

³⁰ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 7/8/85

³¹ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 20/8/85

revealed her renewed enthusiasm for the project: ‘I do feel excited about it all’³² [Emphasis in original]. An important element of this type of group work is having participants who are enthusiastic, motivated and who feel ownership of the idea. After her design’s inconsistent receptions from the various guilds, there was a gradual acceptance of Lawrence’s design. Her detailed explanation of the design to each state and territory guild enabled the embroiderers to begin to understand both the concept of the PHE and their roles in the process.

Lawrence spoke to fifty members of another state guild on 1 September, 1985, whose main objection to the design was its perceived lack of colour:

I also quickly realised that the guild was quite upset at not being able to use colour in their section. I began to explain that I had tried colour but it just didn’t work ... but that I was open to modification of the design if appropriate. I also felt I had to remind them that if they did experiment with colour on the samplers they wouldn’t necessarily be used. We talked animatedly for at least fifteen minutes – they showing me examples of their work to show me what they liked to embroider. The discussion did make me reconsider my approach to that section. I thought about it overnight and determined where I felt I could be flexible – as long as the section reads from a distance as essentially dark and light, we could introduce colour into both the dark and light areas³³ [Emphasis in original].

This entry demonstrated that Lawrence was prepared to negotiate aspects of the design, but was determined to maintain the integrity of her vision. The entry also emphasised the guild’s willingness to show Lawrence the extent of their skills in complicated embroidery; perhaps to assure her of their expertise in undertaking such a complex project. After the talk to the guild members a woman, from a government body, approached Lawrence privately to say she felt it would be unwise to include the Tindale map in the design, as it could be seen as Parliamentary endorsement for Aboriginal claims to that land. Lawrence replied that she would think about her

³² Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 31/8/85

³³ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 31/8/85

objection, but would not promise to change the design. As an artist, Lawrence would have been used to expressing her opinions despite this type of censorship. The inclusion of the map was important to Lawrence's concept of the PHE, particularly regarding issues of land ownership. The woman, who approached her, obviously felt that with the backing of the government – even though she reiterated it was a private comment when she left – Lawrence would change the design. However, the Tindale map was retained.

A further entry the next day recorded how Lawrence explained tonal values within colours to the guild. After this meeting she modified her design to include some colour. She recorded in her diary: 'It was a terrific session – the best so far I think ... in that we were able to communicate and modify our ideas and all feel more confident and clear about the true possibilities of the interpretation... The fact that they verbalised their doubts made such a difference'³⁴ [Emphasis in original]. The process of two way communication with members of this guild had begun to take place, and this would happen gradually with the other guilds as awareness of the design, and Lawrence's enthusiasm, took hold. Lawrence also realised after spending time and staying with some of the members at their homes, that this group of women as a whole had been stereotyped by society, and thus she felt an emotional connection to the group as well:

It is so interesting to meet such a varied group of women. It's made me realise just how older women are lumped together as an uninteresting homogenous group and how pervasive that view is and how, in fact their experiences and knowledge are fascinating. I looked at an autograph book – about 1903 – obviously belonging to a young girl ... so many of the verses were mottoes, homilies about women's place as wives, mothers, that marriage was seen as their only expectation – reminded me of the roses painted on embroidered samplers. I'm becoming so much more aware of the "place" of embroidery in our culture – how and why it's

³⁴ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 31/8/85

valued and by whom – and the difference in making public art work rather than private works!!!³⁵ [Emphasis in original].

Lawrence's awareness and appreciation of embroidery as an expressive form of communication and her respect for the women of the guilds revealed her growing insight and awareness of the social and cultural context which they were working in:

People are unjustly scathing and prejudiced against them and embroidery and the embroiderers. While in many respects they do fit the stereotype they have also, like any other group, individuals who are open and experienced and thoughtful and willing to develop and extend themselves. In fact I'm enjoying my association with them. They have qualities of warmth and caring and support that groups of men don't seem to have in the same way³⁶ [Emphasis in original].

On 15 September, 1985, Lawrence arrived at one of the territories, but unfortunately the state supervisor had to fly to Sydney at short notice and had neglected to leave details of Lawrence's visit; consequently only a small group of women were at the meeting. Lawrence recorded their reaction when they were shown the part of the embroidery they would be working on:

A couple almost reeled away in disbelief. Evidently there's been a fair build up of interest and anticipation and their section was totally outside their expectations. They looked longingly at some of the other sections. I did feel a bit unnerved by their response but it was probably to be expected that a group wouldn't feel too happy with their allotted part. Part of the difficulties of designing a piece without reference to the people who were to make it ... I just hope with time and when they work on it they'll get more involved³⁷ [Emphasis in original].

³⁵ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 31/8/85

³⁶ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 5/12/85

³⁷ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 15/9/85

Lawrence's comment about not being able to create the design with the embroiderers has been a crucial aspect of this case study. The commissioning process did not allow opportunity for this to occur, and therefore the collaborative process focussed on the times, when the embroiderers' skills were required to capture the surface effects of Lawrence's design. Even though Lawrence needed the embroiderers to follow a close interpretation, she was also willing to allow the embroiderers to introduce elements, such as patchwork and dyed voile in addition to embroidery stitches, which had not been considered before discussion with the members. Lawrence's ability to allow the embroiderers' the opportunity to share their perspectives and develop their skills is an important aspect of collaborative leadership (McSweeney & Alexander, 1996). An entry in her diary around this time confirmed the pressure she was under, which made her question her ability to undertake responsibility for such a large group of people: 'Every now and again I get this sinking sensation and think 'all these people are relying on me. Can I handle it?' All this responsibility and trust. In some ways it makes me feel powerful. It's also unnerving'³⁸ [Emphasis in original].

After these initial sessions of introducing the design to the guilds, Lawrence was also confronted with the possibility of taking on all the financial responsibility for the project, in addition to co-ordinating and collaborating with the guilds about the embroidery itself:

I suppose it's the logical progression from my responsibility as an artist for the execution of the embroidery – but nevertheless my stomach contracted at the thought of being responsible for all that money ... I can see why they want to offload it onto me ... It's so complex ... if one wants to be bothered with it at all. I suppose I ought to be flattered that they obviously think I'm responsible to handle it all.³⁹

This additional responsibility which was not part of the initial agreement placed Lawrence in a complicated position between trying to maintain her creativity - and stamina in dealing with the guilds - and confronting an area such as finance, which she had managed to avoid in the past. One of the key success factors in a collaborative

³⁸ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence, 1/11/85

³⁹ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 1/11/85

process is that adequate time and resources are provided (Mattessich et al., 2004). In this case it appeared that Lawrence was expected to take on a disproportionate share of the project.

An intensive sampler making process was instituted for nine months before work could begin on the actual embroidery, to ensure that the effects the embroiderers were creating were what Lawrence had envisaged. Lawrence noted that some of her drawings were not as defined as the ones the guild members had been used to working from. This problem was exacerbated by members who did not fully explore all aspects of their panel in the sampler stage, which led to some problems when the guilds reached the stage of embroidering the actual panels:

As expected there were a few modifications to the figures – but generally they’ve been handled well – the lack of information in the drawing has created problems – I wish we’d had picked them up in the beginning and I’d had a chance to redraw them on tracing paper to clarify the critical areas... I do feel a bit responsible for their difficulties though. And they were a bit slack about getting their samplers done and that meant that they didn’t really identify the problems in time for me to do much about redrawing... I felt a bit mean BUT again this just hadn’t been worked out enough during the sampler stage, so the decision surfaced now instead of before. It’s much more uncomfortable making changes now ... it’s saying ‘that’s wrong, take it out and do something else’ rather than choosing between alternatives.⁴⁰ [Emphasis in original].

Problems also began to arise because only Richards was able to undertake the final round of visits to the guilds, and her expectations were different to Lawrence’s. In her diary Lawrence also suspected that Richard may have felt undermined by Lawrence’s work ethic, and also, as noted earlier, the preference for some of the guilds to listen to Lawrence’s feedback instead of Richards. This confusion of role expectation can result in participants being unsure of their responsibilities:

⁴⁰ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence, 29/11/86

I think Anne felt a bit bad that she'd missed the grass – she mentioned it in the car later. Actually she looked very tired and seemed more stiff and tense than normal. During our conversation in the car she said she thought I'd done more than was expected ... but because I was a perfectionist I'd put the energy into it. I wonder if she thinks I'm pre-empting her job... or thinks because I'm doing so much she's not doing enough⁴¹ [Emphasis in original].

In a letter to the guilds outlining the approach to be taken, Lawrence emphasised the process between the designer and the embroiderers who would be interpreting the design into embroidery. Stage one involved the production of small samplers of approximately ten centimetres square to explore various stitches, colour relationships and to try out different interpretations of each section of the design. Stage two utilised samplers of twenty centimetres square to interpret a larger section of the design using some approaches developed in the first stage, as well as, exploring the juxtaposition of some of the images. Stage three refined the final interpretation in either five centimetre or twenty centimetre squared samplers. Lawrence described the type of communication and interpretation process she envisaged would occur between the various groups:

At the end of this process the designer and co-ordinator, in consultation with the state guilds, will make the final choices of threads, colour, stitches and approach to be used in the interpretation of the design so that most of the problems have been eliminated and the interpretation clearly defined before beginning work on the actual embroidery.⁴²

Initially some embroiderers were frustrated, because they were unable to demonstrate their high levels of skill in terms of the actual complexity of the stitch. Instead they were required to use their sensitivity to create the blending of colours through simpler stitches. Lawrence revealed that this was a different way of working for many embroiderers who had followed patterns, but had never interpreted a drawing into

⁴¹ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence, 29/11/86

⁴² Sampler Stage of Parliament House Embroidery, Letter from Kay Lawrence to the state and territory guilds, 10/5/85

embroidery before.⁴³ Guild members who were also interviewed confirmed the difficulties faced when they had to suspend their traditional way of working to interpret a sixteen metre design, which was both fluid and fixed by watercolour paintings and defined images:

MB: Was there any difficulty with Kay not being an embroiderer?

JF: Yes, the difficulty was that the cartoon, the design, was all in black and white, and, then with the bushfire, of course you know, is a lot of black anyway, but the cartoon, the full size cartoon was in black and white on white paper. The colour cartoon was only that big – what would you say, 20cm – on white paper in watercolour, and we had to work on natural coloured linen. I mean the colour change, to get the colours right, so, that was a slight problem. And getting the design onto the linen was also a problem. It was just a nightmare sorting out which, and to get the background right.⁴⁴

Richards (1987) noted that the most difficult aspect for Lawrence to convey to the embroiderers was the concept of tone. Many of the embroiderers' relished using colour in their own work and were surprised by the perceived lack of colour in the design. The following extract from the video recording *A Work of Many Hands: The Parliament House Embroidery* (1989) clearly demonstrated how Lawrence carefully explained the importance of tonal range to one of the embroidery guilds:

I found when I've gone around, what tends to happen in embroidery you make the darks darker and the lights lighter, and that tends to be happening all over the case, and so, I mean that's quite obviously, um, if we hold that up, it's you can see it's more intense and darker than the original and this is obviously very much lighter, because it shows you in much more detail, than you can see here. Um, the difference in tone of the various areas. Now as I've gone around to visit the guilds, I've realised that people have been concentrating on the colour so much that they've

⁴³ Interview with Professor Kay Lawrence at the University of South Australia, 3/11/04 Adelaide, South Australia.

⁴⁴ Interview with South Australian Embroidery Guild members Peg Saddler, Jo Fuller and Elsie Moss, SA Embroidery Guild, 2/11/04.

lost sight of the importance of the tonal quality of the drawing. By that I mean, the quality of light and dark. If you analyse this you would notice that there's a change from the very blackest areas, which are not actually not a pure black, they're much more like a charcoal. Say for example, here, or her skirt, or the background, to very, very light areas of grey. And in between that there are quite a number of intermediate tones, even the lines, may be quite heavy, or they may fade off and become lighter. Now it's very important in your embroidery you try and get the same relationship of tone that I have got in this particular drawing. If you don't get that you'll find that it won't read as accurately (*A work of many hands: The Parliament House Embroidery*, 1989).

The embroiderers' realised after many discussions with Lawrence that there was scope for wide tonal variations within a reduced palette, and the discussions which ensued were reliant on expertise from both Lawrence and the guild members to arrive at a solution together. The Embroiderers' Guild of Tasmania stated:

When we first saw the images we were to embroider we were deeply disappointed. The work seemed to be almost all black and we wanted to use our expertise in colour, especially in the section depicting John Glover's cottage and garden. There was much gnashing of teeth at the prospect of charcoal foliage and flowers! The incorporation of a variety of matt and shiny threads and permission from the designer, Kay Lawrence to include mauve and olive colours in some areas improved our humour (Statham, 2000, p. 10).

A number of these interpretative issues were documented within the archives and on recordings made at the State Supervisor's Conferences, which were held throughout the project. Lawrence maintained a rigorous program of visits and sampler assessments to ensure the integrity of the design was maintained. She admitted that she was 'open to changes in the design, small changes in the design,'⁴⁵ but maintained fairly strict control, a stricture finally supported by the members themselves. The

⁴⁵ Interview with Professor Kay Lawrence at the University of South Australia, 3/11/04, Adelaide, South Australia.

design could not be changed, particularly as it had been commissioned in that form. However some of the embroiderers found opportunities to enhance the design.⁴⁶ The exciting and challenging part of the PHE was the way in which the guild members worked with Lawrence to achieve something that was beyond each group's expectations. The concept of design and implementation of the PHE occurred during an important era in Australian arts. Bell (2006) has noted that the twenty years from 1965 to 1985, formative years in Lawrence's training, were characterised by:

... radicalism, social upheaval and change, generational conflict, the exploration and politicisation of gender issues, war and global concerns for the state of the environment, all fuelled by increased access to information and the accelerating availability of new technologies. While the revival of the slower and more introspective modes of craft practice may have seemed escapist in the face of such global urgencies, its intimate and individual nature allowed a number of artists to use it as a form of protest, satire and subversion. Feminism, for instance, opened up modes of critical inquiry into what had been categorised and marginalised as women's craft, politicising materials, techniques and approaches to production ... the experimental and adventurous atmosphere that surrounded the crafts during this twenty year period opened new pathways of inquiry to many practitioners, encouraging many to forge unique expressions that would find their way into public collections and, as a result, into the wider world of the visual arts (pp 22 - 23).

Lawrence could therefore see the powerful potential of using embroidery as both a medium to express her concerns about the land, and as a way for enabling skilled craft workers to engage with these broader social and political issues. Embroidery can be appreciated on many levels; however its connection to textiles breaks down many of the barriers traditionally associated with fine art. Using embroidery to complete this work challenged traditional stereotypes relating to the perception of this form of making and associated gender issues.

⁴⁶ Jones (2004) describes an incident in which the embroiderers took the initiative of applying to the South Australian State library for a photocopy of Mary Thomas' handwriting, rather than use Lawrence's hand drawn copy from the original letter (p. 63).

Norming

The norming stage has been typified by people beginning to get organised, working together and setting ground rules and procedures. As the project leader Lawrence fulfilled this stage through focussing the group's effort, and providing feedback and encouragement. The first supervisors' conference, which was pivotal to the entire project, was held in Canberra on Dec 2, 1985, and involved all of the State supervisors displaying the samplers that had been embroidered to date. During this conference samplers were assessed by Lawrence and Richards and feedback was provided. The linen which provided the background to the embroidery was washed and supplied to each of the guilds. Lawrence recalled that following her arrival by plane, she was in one of the guild rooms in half an hour discussing the samplers: '... really thinking on my feet ... especially when I had to comment on pieces I'd never seen before and make instant evaluations.'⁴⁷ She encouraged groups to come back for clarification, after they had time to consider what she had said. The evaluations were tape recorded to enable the supervisors to take the detailed feedback to their guild. Lawrence was particularly pleased with the results of the Tasmanian Guild:

The Tasmanians were just wonderful – sampler after sampler after sampler was unfolded ... they've done so much work and it was just right in most cases. They obviously wanted to slip some more colour into Glover's home and garden but hopefully I've convinced them that the colour should all be in the hill at the back and not in the house and garden ... that they could use the same colour as the ground ... but not to introduce too much mid-tone.⁴⁸

The good relationship and clear communication she had established with the Tasmanian guild had been rewarded with results that were what she had envisaged. Unfortunately, although there had been a change of supervisor, the same cannot be said for another guild which had completed virtually nothing. Lawrence confronted this challenge by being encouraging and supporting. She noted in her diary that the

⁴⁷ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 2/12/85

⁴⁸ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 2/12/85

new supervisor 'seems extremely competent and open and I'm sure she'll get some of them going now that she understands all the ramifications of the project.'⁴⁹

During one of the supervisors' conferences, Lawrence realised that Richards was going to be very important during the project and indicated that she was developing a relationship of trust and confidence with her.⁵⁰ She also described in her diary how some of the supervisors approached her during the conference to confide that their members were not happy with their sections.⁵¹ However, by the end of the conference Lawrence began to sense that the embroiderers were excited by the design, and were beginning to work with each other in ways to realise the PHE.⁵²

The supervisors had now moved through the forming and storming stages, and had arrived at the norming stage of the process as they took this information back to their own guilds. As the samplers were nearing completion and work began on the actual embroidery, problems arose due to a lack of exploration by some guilds, in the sampler stage, and misunderstandings regarding the symbolism of some of Lawrence's images. Working collaboratively with the embroiderers was very important to Lawrence as she guided them towards developing solutions:

I realised fairly quickly that my decision about the sheep had gone against what they wanted to do. Obviously appliquéing the completed sheep onto the panel is easier to embroider and eliminates a lot of risk BUT I didn't like the surface of the machine sewn sheep ... too flat and no form ... but I also felt I had to compromise. ... it would be futile to insist on hand sewn sheep if it was so difficult (the frame is too wide) and went against their desires. So I agreed to look at some more sheep samples and in fact the interpretation developed over lunch as they realised that they could define the sheep with machine thread and then hand embroider them individually⁵³ [Emphasis in original].

⁴⁹ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 2/12/85

⁵⁰ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 2/12/85

⁵¹ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 3/12/85

⁵² Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 5/12/85

⁵³ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 28/11/86

The integrity of Lawrence's design had to be maintained however, and if she felt that integrity was compromised she would not easily change her mind. Lawrence's art training background had taught her how to use visual metaphors and symbolism, a language which may not have been as easily understood by the majority of the embroiderers who had been trained in more realistic interpretation. In one case it appeared that the embroiderers were more concerned about their embroidery skills being concealed, rather than not understanding the symbolic nature of what Lawrence envisaged:

Jacqui and all the guild members strongly disapprove of the broken cross. I think there's that fear of spoiling the potoroo by having the cross run through him ... and they don't easily see the significance of the cross. Damn it – I don't want to change it. I don't think I'm being stubborn for no reason. It is critical to suggest the notion of endangerment – visually and I don't want to use words. A symbol's more appropriate and it's obviously powerful – even if not easily understood⁵⁴ [Emphasis in original].

As the members' trust and confidence grew, they began to see how Lawrence and Richards were facilitating a process which relied on equal participation between themselves and the embroidery guild members:

During the subsequent visits by Anne and Kay I have observed these ladies and how they interact to facilitate this problem solving. Neither lady pretends or has any pretensions to being the 'all knowing' person who has all the answers and could, if they so desired, produce the 'correct' solution. In fact, my admiration for Kay grows as she has to stop her problem solving and almost hand it over to another group of people. They, in turn, have had to try to understand the processes by which she arrived at the concept she presented to us for interpretation on fabric.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 9/2/87

⁵⁵ Letter from Ann Walters to Eva Wilcox, 6/9/86, NLA, MS8369, Series 1/3, Folder 9, States Qld.

The significance of this comment is that the collaborative process relied on equal respect between participants, and effective two-way communication. Lawrence was concerned about working together with the guild members to find solutions, particularly as she was not an embroiderer and relied on the guild members to advise her given their extensive knowledge of stitches and their effects.

Social and cultural expectations have traditionally affected the way textile art has been perceived. Apparently tapestry has been regarded as a higher form of art than embroidery and this is one of the reasons why the Bayeux tapestry,⁵⁶ which was in fact created with embroidery, has been identified as such. Lawrence's diary also noted that an article written about the PHE referred to 'the 'Commonwealth Tapestry' (like the Bayeux Tapestry) that grated a bit and I hope the embroiderers don't take umbrage'⁵⁷ [Emphasis in original]. As Dormer (1994) noted, the art world has perceived skill to be a technical constraint upon self-expression, and not something that can be the content as well as the means of expression (p. 7). He further added that an artist who turns their ideas over to others ultimately becomes a designer:

Designers lose control over their creation once they relinquish is to production, whereas one of the strengths of a handicraft-based art form is the flexibility it allows for the artist to change, expand and explore his/her original intention (or design) until the point he or she considers that the art work is complete (p. 30).

However, Lawrence's extensive communication process and personal visits during the creation of the PHE enabled her to maintain her original intention for the design. In the process it appeared that both the embroiderers and Lawrence were able to learn from one another. During this norming stage there were visible signs of group cohesion evidenced in the guild members' understanding of what was to be undertaken. There was a unity of purpose to have each section of the PHE ready in

⁵⁶ The Bayeux Tapestry (c. 1086) records historic events from the accession of Edward the Confessor to the defeat of Harold at Hastings. It is embroidered with wool on linen, and has been attributed to Queen Mathilda, consort of William the Conqueror, but in reality it was a workshop production (Rogers, 1992).

⁵⁷ Diary entry by Kay Lawrence 14/8/85.

time for it to acclimatise, be joined together and then placed in its case for the opening of Parliament House.

Performing

In the performing stage decisions are reached, results are produced, and people are working together closely and supportively and in most cases showing initiative and resourcefulness. In the case of the Parliament House Embroidery it appeared that Lawrence was able to maintain the integrity of her design throughout whilst, at the same time, providing an opportunity to extend and expand the horizons of the embroiderers involved in this process. In the performing stage members had agreed on each other's role and were working as a team to produce effective outcomes. In a collaborative process the rewards are not solely the prerogative of the leader or supervisor, but should be shared by everyone in the group.

The transcript of a conversation between Lawrence and Walkley in August, 1985 revealed a clear example of the performing stage as they discussed the importance of colour mixing in thread to produce tonal variations:

KL: These two colour ranges are merely designed to give you an idea of the sorts of colours that are necessary in the actual design. For example, there is a warm apricot with some yellow in it and there is more yellow in the colour down here.

RW: Well, if they are working together like a needle painting and you're putting two or three shades together then you come up with that visual look, it's almost like the artist mixing his (sic) paints. We can't mix our threads together as one but in working them together that gives the visual colour.⁵⁸

That the performing stage had been reached was evident in the embroidery guild members' recognition of their growth as embroiderers, and the status given to the PHE after its completion (See Appendix 1H). One of the members recalled: 'The PHE will be for many of us the most outstanding endeavour in our lives. We have grown

⁵⁸ Transcript of a conversation between Kay Lawrence and Rusty Walkley, August 1985, NLA, MS8369, Box 3, Folder 12.

with the demands made upon us, learned patience and compassion, put our own wishes last and worked as a team.’⁵⁹ Richards also recognised how much growth in confidence the embroiderers experienced through their involvement with the PHE, and how this was reflected in the embroidery itself: ‘The hundreds of hours of preliminary stitching, the explorations of options and various interpretations are giving the final work confidence and stature’ (1987).

In the Adelaide Review, a reporter reiterated a common stereotype about embroidery, and the craft guilds generally, but then acknowledged that with Lawrence’s integral role the PHE was a well considered art work.⁶⁰ This perception was also echoed by another reporter in the *Weekend Australian* who recognised the challenges Lawrence faced to bring her design to reality:

Composed of gently related fields of colour, and with a strong sense of line drawing and painterly composition, the design is subtle, attractive and sensitive and avoids didacticism. But it was not what the guild members expected exactly. Many thought a far more ‘pretty’ embroidery contribution that avoided such nasties as, say, bushfires and rabbit plagues, would have been a happier gift. And so you have to say come mid-1987 part of the art of the Commonwealth tapestry (sic) will have derived not only from thousands of nimble fingers but also from Kay Lawrence’s ability to expand the creative horizons of a large group of traditional craftspeople (Ward, 1985).

Meredith Hinchcliffe (1986) emphasised the collaborative aspect of the PHE, noting that every single person was essential, and that their work would achieve historical significance through its permanent installation in Parliament House:

⁵⁹ Letter from Eva Wilcox to Wanda McPherson (Secretary PHEC), Dec 16, 1987, NLA MS8369 Series 12, Folder 71.

⁶⁰ ‘Hearts sank everywhere when it first became known that the Parliament had accepted an offer of a giant embroidery from the Embroiderers’ Guilds. But through the involvement of a professional artist, what might have been an overblown piece of amateurish craft became instead one of the few thoughtful and satisfying works of art which the public can see in the building’ (Dolan, 1988).

The project is undoubtedly an exciting event for Australian embroidery. It is not merely a collaborative effort, and is bigger than any of the Guilds and the members. No one could have done it individually. Members are thrilled to be involved in a permanent art work for the Parliament House, a first in Australia, and the only “grass roots” project in the Parliament House. Rumour has it that the embroidery is shaping up to be one of the best works of art in the New Parliament House.

From these public comments it was evident that the PHE had broken a number of stereotypes and had succeeded in being recognised as an art work, created through craft techniques.

Responses to the Interview Schedule

The questions on the interview schedule were designed to investigate whether the participants felt they had engaged in a collaborative process, and if so, to what extent this had been achieved. Other areas which were covered by the interview schedule concerned issues of gender, perceptions of art making and acknowledgment of the participants in documentation. This section will briefly summarise responses from the guild members and Professor Kay Lawrence under the headings: Collaboration, Gender and Acknowledgment.

Collaboration

During an interview with Professor Kay Lawrence in November 2004, we discussed a number of issues concerning the PHE which were guided by the interview schedule outlined in chapter four. When asked to describe what the term collaboration meant to them, I found that many of the participants used it interchangeably with terms such as cooperation or coordination. Some participants described some of the processes they were engaged in which were collaborative, but which were not recognised by them as such. Other participants felt that the interpretive stage of the PHE was collaborative, but the actual embroidering was not. This response however fluctuated between various guilds and seemed to be affected by relationships within the guild itself, and by the extent of the rapport they had developed with Lawrence and Richards.

When asked to explain the term collaboration Lawrence emphasised the interpretive stage of the embroidery and the embroiderers' skills in helping her to realise the design. Lawrence also acknowledged that there were a number of different types of collaborations that could also be attributed to various stages in the project. In particular reference to the PHE Lawrence noted:

So, if you want to talk about the Parliament House Embroidery, I initiated the design, you know according to a brief, so there were some constraints about what the design was. I didn't get to choose the collaborative team that was going to make it, because again it was part of the way the whole project had been structured before I was involved in it. And so I suppose it was collaborative in the sense that the embroiderers, Anne Richards who was the coordinator and I started to develop the way the design would be interpreted together, and that happened through a process of discussion, developing samples, but I had the final say I suppose in actually how the design would be interpreted into embroidery, and then they really took responsibility for translating the design into embroidery. So it was collaborative, very much collaborative in terms of how we developed the interpretation. I didn't have the skills or the knowledge of the stitches that they had. So that's what they brought to it, and I suppose I had an idea of how I wanted the design to be interpreted, but it wasn't until we all started talking and looking at the samples – I was quite open to what they wanted to do. I mean that part was very collaborative.⁶¹

In order to understand specifically how the collaboration took place I asked Professor Lawrence if the embroiderers, given their skills and knowledge of embroidery, would have overridden any of her own decisions:

Well I had no ... I didn't really know how this design could be translated into embroidery. I didn't start with that premise. I designed it as a narrative, a sequence of images. And I thought that there were a couple, I suppose, I had some idea about some stitches that might be used, but I

⁶¹ Interview with Professor Kay Lawrence at the University of South Australia, 3/11/04, Adelaide, South Australia.

didn't really conceive of it in terms of particular embroidery stitches or styles of embroidery. I really needed the input from the embroiderers really to work out the best way of interpreting that particular design into embroidery. For me the important things were the quality of the images, the colour relationships, the drawing marks, the fact that a lot of the images were based on drawings in watercolours, getting that sort of nuance in thread, in the photographic images, so they would get the relationship between the dark and light sections right. And I was open to changes in the design, small changes in the design, because the Tasmanian embroiderers hated the idea that they were all going to be embroidering black and white, and so we actually talked about the fact that it wasn't just black and white, that there's a whole range of whites, and there's a whole range of blacks. And in the image that's based on Glover's house and garden I wanted it to be like an idea, so that it's not a naturalistic image, it's actually the idea that these settlers brought with them, so it's actually important I suppose, that it's in black and white, but then this idea was transposed onto an Australian environment, and so that meant that in fact it would be quite good if the hill behind it was done more naturalistically, so I mean that came out of our negotiation and discussion. So it was give and take all the way through.⁶²

Lois Evans, the ACT guild supervisor, confirmed Lawrence's description of the embroiderers' expertise by explaining how this occurred during the making of the samplers. Evans said that Lawrence's attention to detail and her recognition that embroidery was not her medium were paramount to the success of the sampler process: '... and then she would, um, redefine them and say, 'Yes, I want a little more of this pink shading, sweep it up there, this has to be stronger, a stronger green. I don't understand embroidery threads, what would you suggest?''⁶³ Evans felt there definitely was collaboration during the development of the sampler stage. Margaret Roberts from the ACT guild was responsible for joining all of the state and territory guild sections together, after they had spent ten months acclimatising at the Australian

⁶² Interview with Professor Kay Lawrence at the University of South Australia, 3/11/04, Adelaide, South Australia.

⁶³ Phone interview with ACT Embroiderers' Guild Supervisor, Lois Evans, 22/5/06.

Archives Repository at Mitchell in Canberra. She stated that collaboration was present during the creation of the PHE, but was also evident in the various sub committees.⁶⁴ Roberts explained that there were numerous sub-committees formed which dealt with specific aspects of the PHE: ‘You see that was the collaboration, and she’d [Hyslop] call in people with expertise in some things, you know, and even in the fundraising and things like that.’ In order to fulfil her invaluable role as joiner, she consulted with the National Gallery of Australia’s conservation expert Josephine Carter:

I was working at the um, in textiles conservation, at the National Gallery, and um, at the time of the collaboration, and I had Josephine who was the head conservator, textiles conservator, and her extensive knowledge was indeed a blessing. There was a precedent, there was no precedent for such a long textile to be mounted, and I consulted often with Josephine at work. I used to bail her up at morning tea, because I didn’t like to, I asked her so many questions, you know, so I used to do it at morning tea.

Roberts felt, that for her, this relationship was collaborative because she was acquiring new skills. Various members had sought expertise in order to develop their skills to meet particular tasks, and were resourceful and creative in doing so – particularly as many of these requests for help and support could not be financially reimbursed. When asked whether it took longer to engage in collaboration Roberts replied with reference to the PHE: ‘Well, you didn’t have to ... they were there, and most of the people as I was, in the embroidery, looked to you to tell them what to do.’ Roberts also said in this respect she would not describe the part of the process where all of the decisions had been made and people were embroidering as being collaborative. She said that the embroiderers did not decide where colours should go, because the decisions had already been made with Lawrence and the supervisors. Further on in the interview Roberts explained this perception further: ‘So there was collaboration with the leaders ... and you know with Kay and that sort of thing. But as for the individual um, I don’t know whether you’d call that collaboration, when they, as you said, um or Lois said, cooperated.’

⁶⁴ Phone interview with Margaret Roberts, ACT Embroiderers’ Guild, 25/5/06.

Joan Selnes, the Queensland supervisor of the PHE from its inception till 1985, and Eva Wilcox from 1985 to 1988, were both able to attend the interview in Brisbane. When asked to describe collaboration Wilcox replied: ‘... it was ‘a work of many hands’ ... each one had a measure and an input, even if was just the cleaning. It all helps, bringing cups of tea, a supportive word; that is eventually a big part of it. It is not just a skill alone.’⁶⁵ Wilcox had taken over from Selnes, and had a great deal of trouble initially trying to attract the interest of Queensland embroiderers in the PHE. Her frustration was revealed in a letter to the ACT supervisor Lois Evans:

Ten days ago we finally finished our three parts of the PHE. It has been a joyful experience in so many ways, bringing people together and getting to know them, but otherwise it has been a long hard slog. I never imagined that so few people were willing to commit themselves. Yes, an hour here and there, when it suits or pleases them.⁶⁶

Anecdotal conversations with other guild members in South Australia and Tasmania revealed that they felt the support network established through the PHE was collaborative, because it was all part of a group effort. An interview with the Tasmanian guild members, who worked on the PHE, revealed that they clearly understood that someone needed to be in charge. Margaret Thompson stated that it was important to have a ‘boss’:

Somebody who really can hold the whole thing together and says ‘No’ when it’s necessary to say no ... I say, we really had to do as we were told, because it had to all come together ... We couldn’t have anybody, um, going out on their own.⁶⁷

The members interviewed in addition to Margaret Thompson were Helen Statham, Edith Johnston, Suzanne Alright, and Jillian Bath. Their initial disappointment at being asked to embroider a monochromatic panel was alleviated somewhat when

⁶⁵ Interview with Eva Wilcox and Joan Selnes, Queensland Embroiderers’ Guild, 14/6/05.

⁶⁶ Letter from Eva Wilcox (Qld supervisor) to Lois Evans (ACT supervisor), 29/3/87.

⁶⁷ Interview with Tasmanian embroidery guild members Margaret Thompson, Helen Statham, Edith Johnston, Suzanne Alright, Jillian Bath, 28/11/04.

Lawrence produced another version of the drawing with slight washes of colour through parts of it. During more detailed questioning about whether they felt the process was collaborative, they noted that Lawrence spent a lot of time in discussion with them during the interpretive stage of the PHE, but was very firm in maintaining the integrity of her design:

MT: I think she was very firm.

SA: She knew what she wanted.

MT: She knew exactly what she wanted.

EJ: Oh yes.

HS: That's the impression I got.

MT: That she was firm. Yes, she was very firm. Which I thought was great.

MB: Yes. So when people came up with their stitches, because she wouldn't have known what sort of stitches you were going to use ...

MT: She either said she liked it or she didn't. She was quite good at saying if she didn't. [Laughs]

EJ: Well no, if it didn't fit in with her design, or with the vision she had of it, she let us know and we amended it.⁶⁸

Further discussion revealed that the Tasmanian guild felt that there needed to be overall supervision, with Thompson adding that they really had to do as they were told. She conceded that this was necessary so that all the panels fitted in together: 'We couldn't have anyone going out on their own.' Johnston added that: 'Well somebody had to be in control of a big thing like that. Oh yes, you can't have half a dozen people in there in charge.'

Large groups who are working towards a goal require some type of leadership so that they can move ahead and progress. Without this, many groups would have floundered, and not have been able to achieve something as monumental as the PHE. The important aspect of the PHE however, was that Lawrence had sought a devolved form of leadership through the state and territory supervisors, resulting in horizontal

⁶⁸ Interview with Tasmanian embroidery guild members Margaret Thompson, Helen Statham, Edith Johnston, Suzanne Alright, Jillian Bath, 28/11/04.

and diagonal forms of communication, as opposed to the traditional hierarchical, vertical form of communication. Lawrence also demonstrated a readiness to admit her own lack of knowledge and skills and value the superior skills and knowledge of others.

Rusty Walkley, the Western Australia guild supervisor, described collaboration as: '... working together, between um, the people whose ideas you're trying to interpret, incorporate, and the, the people who you gather around you, and for them to work with you, as a team ... And that's what it comes down to. It's a team work.'⁶⁹ When asked if this description could be applied to the PHE, Walkley replied:

It was a team work. It had to be a team work. It couldn't have worked otherwise. You would have had too many individualities in it, without it flowing as one long panel to read as a story. And that was the whole idea that I felt, when I first saw the whole design, one that this is eight separate states, this is eight separate panels, but ... it's got to be one. And it's got to flow. And it couldn't do that unless we all worked as teams. The eight states worked as teams. And, and when you couldn't see what the others were doing, it was almost like having to be telepathic. And, and when we got the newsletter from Kay, they sent us a newsletter, every so often. Ah, we would digest these newsletters because that, that told us what the other states were doing.⁷⁰ [Emphasis in original].

There was a well established communication network operating during the PHE with monthly newsletters being distributed to all of the states and territories, visits by Lawrence and Richards, conferences with the state and territory supervisors and feedback from Lawrence and Richards recorded on audiotape relating to the samplers being sent back to the respective guilds.

An interview with the South Australian Embroiderer's Guild was held in November 2004 with Peg Saddler (Supervisor), Jo Fuller and Elsie Moss (Section Leaders).⁷¹

⁶⁹ Phone interview with Rusty Walkley, Western Australia Embroiderer's Guild, 4/9/06.

⁷⁰ Phone interview with Rusty Walkley, Western Australia Embroiderer's Guild, 4/9/06.

⁷¹ Interview with South Australian Embroidery Guild members Peg Saddler, Jo Fuller and Elsie Moss,

Moss described collaboration as: ‘Basically working together, which is what we did.’ Saddler rejoined with: ‘It takes a lot of tact.’ Moss expanded on this point by saying: ‘Yes, if somebody was doing something the wrong way you have to suggest they should do it that way.’ There was consensus during the interview that not everybody likes to work in this manner; however the importance of achieving unity throughout the embroidery required that the design and the decisions worked through in the interpretation stages were adhered to as closely as possible. The importance of adhering to the design and the interpretation was also paramount for this guild. The members present at the interview described how they had worked together on the samplers, and then shown the other members how to achieve the same effect.

Wanda McPherson, the Victorian Embroiderers’ Guild supervisor, described the collaborative process and how Lawrence modified her approach with their guild: ‘It was necessary for Kay to have hard and fast ideas, and I think along the way, she did um soften, and take on board um comments, and suggestions, um so yeah I think, I think you could say it was collaboration as well.’⁷² When asked to describe the characteristics of a collaborative process McPherson replied:

... communication is obviously a fairly important component. Um, but I think enthusiasm as well, and to have an open mind and not, not be too set ... you really have to be fairly open minded, but you still have to have a fairly clear idea of the outcome you’d like to be able to achieve. Because I think if you don’t have some goals for yourself there’s the danger that you’re really going to lose your integrity, and the whole thing will slide across. Um, you know so the principle is that it’s sort of fifty fifty, but I think the whole idea is that it’s not just one person being guided; it has to be a joint venture. So even if it’s not set out as being a collaborative project, you still do have to collaborate with those that are going to be the workers, because they, as I said, they have to be enthusiastic about it. And if they’re not really enthusiastic about it ... and if they can’t relate to what they’re trying to achieve, you won’t get their best work.

SA Embroidery Guild, 2/11/04.

⁷² Interview with Wanda McPherson, Embroiderers’ Guild of Victoria supervisor, Malvern, Victoria, 20/10/05.

The element of enthusiasm and passion for the task at hand was essential, McPherson argued, for a successful collaborative venture. McPherson went on to explain during the interview that after the interpretation of the design had been decided, the Victorian guild deferred to Anne Richards as the National Coordinator. That Richards was from Melbourne, and was well known to the guild, may also have had some bearing on this relationship:

... the people that were working on the particular piece, um, didn't really, um, have the opportunity, or the need to speak to Kay directly, um, Kay's role was quite involved and I think some of the other states needed more of her time than we needed. But I think we'd resolved a lot of things early on, and in a couple of areas, um, I might have made some decisions, and then said to her "Look there was a small issue and I decided to do such and such, so you know I hope that's okay." Or sometimes I went through Anne because basically, ah, once the design had been put down, that was really the end of Kay's jurisdiction because Anne was to expedite how the design was interpreted ... So once everybody was happy with the design, um, there was no issue with Kay from that point on really.

Marjorie Beck the supervisor of the New South Wales Guild described collaboration as working together. She felt that collaboration had occurred during the execution of the panel for the PHE, 'with all concerned who worked closely together.'⁷³ Kathleen Short the supervisor of the Northern Territory guild noted that: 'There was certainly a great 'working together' with our group – not only members, but the public as well.'⁷⁴ Short revealed that members of the public often came in to see how the PHE was progressing as they were housed in a room at her husband's doctor's surgery.

It has become clear through a range of documentation that some of the guilds required more support than others, due to their difficulty in working in such a different way. Lawrence and Richards support and communication, however, and the eventual

⁷³ Letter dated 6/10/06 from Marjorie Beck, Embroiderers' Guild of NSW supervisor to the current President Wendy Schmid.

⁷⁴ Letter dated 6/10/06 from Kathleen Short, Embroiderer's Guild of the Northern Territory (now defunct) supervisor to Margaret Baguley.

acceptance and understanding of the design, helped to facilitate this process more effectively.

Gender

An interesting aspect which arose during this study was the perception of the notion of art making, how some forms of art making had traditionally been ascribed to gender and contextualised through social and cultural expectations. As Dormer (1997) noted, with particular reference to textiles:

However, what differentiates art textiles from other forms of visual art practice is the use of craft as a medium for creating meaning. Craft – handmaking – is not important in other art practices. This difference is one of the features that accounts for some of art textiles’ energy but it is also its undoing. For craft is not an issue of debate in the art world as a whole: craft simply does not figure in the art magazines or the serious art reviews in newspapers as a subject to discuss (p. 175).

Dormer further explained that this attitude towards textiles has been created by people who had a certain way of looking at, talking about and selecting contemporary art – ostensibly he is referring to the art world. Therefore, I felt it was important to see if the fact that the PHE was created predominately by women had caused any issues or discussion amongst the participants.

I asked Professor Lawrence if she felt that it was a more collaborative process because women worked on the embroidery. She replied:

Some, people who work in other disciplines, like painters have said to me – they tend to work independently they don’t develop collaborative projects, the way that people who work in textiles do. So I don’t think it’s just gender, although because textiles is such a gendered discipline, and mainly done by women, you know there is that aspect of gender to it, but I think it’s the fact that people, you know a lot of textiles practice is collaborative. Like tapestry weaving is a collaborative practice, and it’s a practice that I have used myself. It makes sense to work with other people

because you know you just can't work fast enough to do large works on your own. Quilt making you know is a collaborative practice, so as you know are many textiles practices, and that's just in white communities, in indigenous communities, you know the gathering of materials, the making of things is a collaborative practice as well.

Evans, the ACT guild supervisor, noted that men did not work on the PHE, and were not part of the guild, but did not provide a reason for this: 'Well ... there weren't any men working on it, and traditionally it has been you know 'secret women's business,' but um, I can't see any reason why men couldn't have worked on it. But we just obviously haven't had them in the guild.' When asked if the same type of art work could have been made if men were involved, Evans replied:

I think you'd probably have more egos coming forward, but I, I'm teaching my grandson to stitch and he's won awards, so I don't accept that men can't do embroidery ... they've just not been exposed to it. But they tend to like canvas work which is very mathematical and rigid, and they do tend to work on their own, so I think the women um, were used to stitching together and sharing inspiration, sharing our lives, and it was quite, I think it was quite a spiritual journey for us, a very exciting one.

Evans was quite adamant however, that men played an important role during the PHE by driving some of their partners' great distances to be able to contribute to the embroidery, although her next comment seemed to reinforce a social stereotype: '... so men did play a role, and in this paper I'm going to send you I think Wanda McMahon refers to the roles the men played in supporting us and putting up with sketchy meals or no meals at all.' Margaret Roberts, the joiner of the PHE, and also a member of the ACT guild revealed that she felt women were great organisers and were more likely than men to give freely of their time. Roberts initial denial, when asked if men could have created the PHE, changed to consideration of the subject matter which men could be interested in: 'No, no. And I don't think they um, oh maybe they would, because they do in the museums and things, work many, many hours on restoring planes and things. You know, well I know some of my friends who've worked on that, and they didn't get paid for it ...'

A number of the guilds expressed very strongly that the support of their partners was very important to the PHE's successful completion, and acknowledged that some of the men designed the frames and supports, in addition to building models of the case so that logistical problems could be addressed. Walkley, the Western Australian guild supervisor, referred to the fact that embroidery was initially 'men's work,' and once they are aware of this history they are often persuaded to consider it a form of personal expression:

But when I talk to them, they always say they're so interested when I tell them that embroidery was never a woman's work to start with anyway. And you see I teach history, of um all the needle arts, and to look at history you go way back thousands of years before Christ, basically um, with the coloured embroideries, the silks and things, goes back to China, ancient China, was most responsible, um, for embroidery. And it was always revered more than the paintings ... I had one exhibition with the guild not too long ago where there was a magnificent, very large, it was a needlepoint tapestry, beautifully done, and it was an aircraft, a big bomber, all in detail, it was beautifully done. And this, she had taught her husband to do this, and he decided he wanted to do the aircraft that he fought in during the war. The last war. And it was really beautiful. It was beautifully done. Um, and we've got other people, men who are not well and one thing and another, and they all um, they all do some form of stitchery and they enjoy it. They're not any longer, um ashamed to put their work into art and craft exhibitions if they've been doing it.

Walkley also noted that there were some social and cultural perceptions of embroidery which still existed within the guild:

RW: But we still do have this macho thing from some of the younger members, who still don't think it's good for males to be seen embroidering with females.

MB: 'Macho' meaning from the male members?

RW: Well it is a macho thing, and it's usually the, the, what I call the thirty, forty year olds. It's not so much even the younger ones because our art, our art students who go to Curtin University and places like this, there are quite a few males in ah, textiles, so there's no problem there, it's this older group and I would say that they're mainly the men who've come from the mining families or farming families where it was not considered a male's thing to do something like that.

MB: No, no. Oh, isn't that interesting.

RW: Yes it is. You, you've got two camps really if you think about it ...

[Laughs] ... the artistic one and the arty one. But I'll tell you this, the men that have gone through my hands, um, they're wonderful at their designs.

Walkley has also reiterated Evans's point about men being more comfortable with the technical, mathematical side of embroidery. The participants in this case study were careful not to reinforce stereotypes between men and women, but it was evident that they existed to differing extents. Brizendine in the article 'Why we're hemispheres apart' stated that: 'I know it's not politically correct to say this but I've been torn for years between my politics and what science is telling us. I believe that women actually perceive the world differently from men' (Midgley, 2006, p. 26).

When the South Australian guild members were asked if they thought there were some ways that women work or design that might have facilitated the outcome of the embroidery, they replied:

EM: It's probably a softer design than a man would have done. There's no real hard edges in it are there. They're all sort of close.

MB: No, that's true. Even the black and white.

EM: Yes, there a, sort of flow through.

PS: And I think women can relate to, all the history in it. The bits of the Tasmanian section, you know the ...

MB: The pioneer women ...

PS: Yes.

MB: And what about the way women work together.

EM: Well I think they're probably more used to working together.

PS: Yes.

[Laughter]

JF: Well especially here anyway. I mean that's part of our ...

PS: It's part of the ...

JF: Yes, part of the embroiderers' guild to work together.

This statement linked the embroidery guilds of Australia to their traditional origins in the medieval guilds. These guilds were also constructed to enable support for like-minded artisans, and in some cases, also provided financial and emotional assistance. When asked if gender may have played an important role in the successful completion of the PHE Marjorie Beck from NSW stated that gender was irrelevant. She also said the fact that the PHE was carried out by women was because more women embroider than men. Kathleen Short from the NT said that she believed gender was not an issue. 'Our piece happened because of the help of many husbands in making the frame – transport – use of surgery – even a few stitches from one or two.' Because embroidery has been socially inculcated to be the work of women, many of the embroiderers accepted this as an incontestable fact.

Acknowledgement

The literature review for this study revealed that issues of identity in art making were considered essential in maintaining the status of the artist, therefore acknowledging other people who may have been involved in the creation of an artist's work was tantamount to 'professional suicide.' This aspect of the interview schedule asked whether it was important for artists to acknowledge the names of other people on documentation, which will be seen publicly. Due to the fact that over five hundred embroiderers were involved in the PHE it was impractical to list all of their names on the signage at Parliament House, however they were clearly identified as having contributed their skills to the Parliament House Embroidery. Each state section is defined on a map for the viewer, which is also located near the signage for the work. The original guild members who worked on the Parliament House Embroidery confirmed that they felt it was important that they were recognised for contributing, but were satisfied with the way they were identified at Parliament House. They also pointed out that the book detailing the project *A Work of Many Hands* does list the name of every embroiderer involved.

Lawrence also felt strongly that artists should acknowledge designers and craftspeople who work with them:

Oh, I think they should be you know, there should be written on the signage for the work all the names of the people who were involved – if there are not hundreds – should be acknowledged. I suppose in relation to the Parliament House Embroidery, because there were over 500 people involved it wasn't possible to put all their names on the signage near the work, but it does actually say it was designed by me and was coordinated by me and Anne Richards, and it was made by the guilds, the members of the guilds. So that everyone was acknowledged in terms of having made the work, and in the book. In the book of course everybody's name is included in the work so everybody who was involved in the sampler making process, who put a stitch in the final embroidery is actually acknowledged in the book.

Wilcox and Selnes from the Queensland guild replied that it was impractical to list all of the names on the panel beside the PHE at Parliament House in Canberra. Wilcox also added that the recognition for their work was also on an emotional level, as members realised they had become part of living history: 'Everybody felt that it was kind of an historical enterprise.' Members of the Tasmanian guild felt that people who contributed to the actual art work should definitely be acknowledged, because as Johnstone noted, to be denied this was 'hurtful'. Statham added that if a person was making a living from their work, then they should acknowledge other people's assistance. Walkley said that the community aspect of the embroidery guild was ingrained from the very beginning:

And we'd been doing community arts, on and off over the years, I, we've done it with arts and crafts associations of which we've also been members, we've done it for ourselves or for charity, we've worked on many, many community things, and never once has there been any animosities, or we, if we do something we always say who designed it and who worked on it, and we're terribly happy to do this.

Walkley also noted that the book *A Work of Many Hands* was a fine tribute to the embroidery guild members and represented ‘a wonderful fellowship of people’.

The South Australian guild members felt that there would be too many names to incorporate on the panel itself, but perhaps another sign could be placed nearby with the names of all the embroiderers on public display. A suggestion from the Tasmanian guild was to have an audio commentary available to the public which recorded the making of the PHE, in addition to interviews with some of the guild members. Saddler made an interesting point when we were discussing how some contemporary artists engage other people to produce work, but do not acknowledge it. She stated that: ‘... it was understood back in those, in Rubens’ time that’s what they did. But nowadays people don’t realise that’s what they’re doing.’ This aspect of concealment in some contemporary artist’s work can be attributed to the artist’s concern that people may perceive they had diluted their genius by creating work with, or giving a section of work to complete with another person. McPherson stated that the intrinsic rewards of the PHE were acknowledgment enough for their members:

I don’t know that the guild necessarily wanted recognition for their participation. They were acknowledged, um, and I think people just felt their reward was actually being involved in the process, and you know a lot of them are quite proud of it that they’ll say “Oh yes, I was involved in the Parliament House Embroidery.” You know really with quite a bit of pride about the fact that they were involved in it.

Beck described acknowledgment as a difficult area ‘because people tend to want recognition for their input, and often have definite ideas as to the direction which should be followed towards the final outcome’. Short said that more people are increasingly seeing collaboration as a way to enhance their community.

The three themes of collaboration, gender and acknowledgment have briefly been summarised from participants in the PHE to provide links with issues that arose in the literature review. They will also provide an interesting comparison to how these issues have been perceived in the other case studies.

Phenomenological Essence

The process of collaboration during the planning, and creation of the Parliament House Embroidery, was later described by the participants as a time of risk-taking. Despite early doubts by some guilds, the majority of members developed a sense of combined enthusiasm as the project evolved. This contagious enthusiasm gave them both the confidence and a belief that they could complete the project. However, initially, Lawrence and the embroiderers felt overwhelmed at the scale of the project, but became more confident as work progressed. During the PHE, Lawrence revealed and shared her sources to help the participants understand why their section was depicted in a particular way. Lawrence was described by the participants as being reassuring and encouraging. The participants also recounted feeling a sense of ownership for their section, particularly those who worked with Lawrence to change some of her initial design decisions. The respect for each others' expertise enabled Lawrence, and the embroiderers, to modify initial design decisions. The guild members defined collaboration as being able to work together under the guidance of a sensitive but a firm leader, to mutually achieve the standard required.

The participants described feeling motivated and supported when they worked collaboratively on their section, which was further enhanced by a sense of fun and achievement. They were interested in and enjoyed the particular section that they were working on, and in some cases were able to nominate areas. The relationships that developed between the participants in the PHE were described as being intrinsic to the success of the collaborative process. There was a self-described 'energy' amongst the participants who worked on the PHE. The embroiderers donated time, their own resources and undertook research without any financial reimbursement. The need to produce quality work outweighed an individual's need for recognition.

Some participants left the project, when they realised the work was more extensive than they had initially thought. Other embroiderers recognised their limitations, in terms of skills, and provided support in other ways to the group. Participants revealed that they felt rewarded just by being involved in the collaborative process itself, and felt an emotional attachment to the PHE even though they had not actually stitched on it. The PHE was described by the majority of participants as fostering relationships

between a diverse range of people, and that in itself, they argued, was a wonderful concept. The embroiderers also learnt how to be receptive to, and cooperate with, other members of the group. Different guilds were also able to provide personal support to one another. In some instances the supervisors avoided direct confrontation with the participants, if their embroidery was not quite up to standard. The supervisors often undertook extra work to rectify the issue, and also found ways for everyone in the group to feel involved.

The completion of the PHE was likened by one participant to losing a child and was also described as an exciting, enriching and spiritual journey. The participants experienced a sense of achievement and joy, when the sections were finally joined together and the embroidery could be seen in its entirety. There was a very real sense that the embroiderers were linked, historically, to other commemorative embroideries. A number of participants proposed that the permanent installation of the PHE was validation of its importance. Although the embroiderers were required to hand over their samplers when they finished, some were so delighted with their efforts that they kept them. The embroiderers still remember key dates during the project and celebrate them.⁷⁵ They also noted that women work more easily together, and the ethos of the various embroidery guilds also encouraged this attitude.

Conclusion

In the context of this study, the Parliament House Embroidery was the result of over five hundred embroiderers' skills, the coordination by Anne Richards and the artistic sensibility of the artist and designer Kay Lawrence. This case study has described the various stages of group formation that the PHE progressed through. The complex nature of collaboration was illustrated particularly during the times when the skills of the embroiderers matched those of Lawrence. This occurred when both parties listened to and exchanged information as needed to work towards a common goal. White and O'Brien (1999) confirmed the importance of collaborative leaders recognising the 'giftedness' of participants. In doing so, they develop an environment 'that enables true collaboration to flourish' (p. 18). The PHE cannot be described as being wholly a collaborative process, because the design had already been accepted

⁷⁵ A special guided 'behind the scenes' tour of Parliament House recently took place on 1/2/07 for the ACT Guild to mark the twentieth anniversary of the completion of their section.

by the committee, and was given to the guilds as the template to work from. Notwithstanding this, it was obvious from the hours of recordings made at the supervisor's conferences, and the feedback audiotapes that there was extensive collaboration between the embroiderers and Lawrence. A devolved form of leadership was advocated, and initiated by Lawrence, and relied on the guild supervisors to keep communication channels open between her and the guilds. The sampler stage was by necessity quite extensive, as this was the stage where the embroiderers and Lawrence were able to work through interpretations which not only replicated the design, but also captured its feeling.

The responses to the interview schedule revealed that the term collaboration was used to describe a range of working methods, but given the definition for this study, it was most effectively seen during the times when the guild members and Lawrence felt they were of equal standing; and both were able to contribute their knowledge and skills in finding ways to depict drawing and painting techniques into the medium of textiles. Gender appeared to be such an ingrained aspect of people's lives that even though it was referred to, its ramifications did not appear to be apparent to some of the participants. The section on acknowledgment garnered a range of responses with some of the guilds feeling that being involved in the PHE was enough reward, and others stating that their names should be on public display. Issues of ego were raised, spontaneously, during this section of the questioning, and revealed that perhaps this was also an issue which had been socially inculcated.

Chapter 6: Case Study – Victorian Tapestry Workshop (VTW)

The Victorian Tapestry Workshop (VTW) located in South Melbourne, was established in 1976 by the Victorian Government. Melbourne has become to be regarded as the world centre for contemporary tapestry, with the VTW one of the leading tapestry workshops in the world. The workshop's technically excellent tapestries have been exhibited widely throughout Europe, Asia and the United States. The idea for a tapestry workshop in Melbourne was established after the Victorian Governor's wife, Lady Delacombe, had viewed an exhibition of French Tapestries at the National Gallery of Victoria.¹ She questioned, given Australia's fine art craft tradition and rich wool industry, whether a tapestry tradition could be established in this country. A viability study was undertaken and advice was sought from many people including Archie Brennan, the Director of Dovecot Studios in the United Kingdom.² The model for the Victorian Tapestry Workshop was based on his dictum, that all of the weavers should have initially trained as artists.³ After a two year feasibility study, a Board of Directors was nominated which appointed Sue Walker in 1976 as the Director of the VTW, a position she maintained until 2004. The orientation of the workshop during these critical early stages of development was described by Walker as follows:

They could have brought out European weavers and set up a traditional European style workshop, or they could make it as a completely Australian enterprise as they wanted to. And they decided to do the latter, which I think was very exciting. What they did do was to decide to adopt the philosophy of the Scottish workshop in Edinburgh, the Dovecot, and the very interesting thing about their philosophy is that it's based in a

¹ The tapestries were exhibited from Dec 1973 to January 1974.

² The Dovecot Studios was established in Edinburgh in 1912 by the 4th Marquess of Bute. The founding weavers came from William Morris' Merton Abbey Workshops in Wimbeldon, London. The studios were incorporated as The Edinburgh Tapestry Company in 1946 although they also continued to be known as Dovecot.

³ Contact with Archie Brennan and the Dovecot studios enabled a number of Australian artists to move into tapestry weaving as their primary means of expression. Belinda Ramson had worked with Brennan in 1967 and 1963, and they both involved in helping to establish the VTW.

collaborative relationship between the artists who design the tapestries and the weavers who weave them.⁴

When the workshop began in 1976, there were no tapestries produced in this collaborative spirit hanging in a public building in Melbourne.⁵ At this time artists such as Arthur Boyd, Charles Blackman and John Perceval were sending slides of their work to Europe to be transposed into tapestry.⁶ The workshop's philosophy of collaboration between artists and weavers differed from this traditional European model, in which the artist handed over a design to be faithfully rendered in tapestry, often in editions of five or more. The VTW provided the first formal professional training in tapestry weaving in Australia, and initially Walker ran training courses in the workshop to teach these skills.

Forming

Walker noted that when the Victorian Tapestry Workshop began there were quite a few people who had been initially trained as weavers – contradicting the dictum from Archie Brennan – however, the workshop needed people who could understand the technique of tapestry weaving. The VTW, over time, gradually started to employ primarily trained artists, who undertook apprenticeships at the VTW to learn tapestry weaving skills:

... we recognised one key factor, and that was, artists need other artists to collaborate with. They need people who have a trained eye, who are trained in the sensibility that artists have, who would have that hopefully to start with, and who as weavers, would be able to meet other artists on equal ground, on equal footing. So that our practice has been to employ people in the workshop who are trained as fine artists. We did have at the beginning quite a lot of people who were trained as weavers, who thought they would be able to find jobs in the workshop, and didn't really quite understand why the fact that you could make one thread go over another

⁴ 'Tapestry and its place in Contemporary Art Practice' Lecture delivered by VTW Director Sue Walker, 7/6/91, Audio recording.

⁵ Currently there are over forty tapestries exhibited in Melbourne, and to date the VTW have completed over three hundred and fifty tapestries, 20% of which hang overseas.

⁶ John Coburn's *Sun and Moon* made for the Sydney Opera House was woven at Abusson in France.

thread, or do, all manner of different and exciting things with it, didn't give the sort of background that we wanted.⁷

At the time, within both the Australian arts and crafts communities, there were questions raised as to whether the tapestries were copies, not art works in their own right:

The first tapestries were made as examples to demonstrate the scope of the weavers and the workshop, but after that, when the workshop became better known, work was made to commission. The tapestries made drew very largely on the work of contemporary painters, some of whom made paintings specifically for translation to tapestry, which raised controversy in various sections of the art and weaving communities. Criticism ranged from the use of commercial colours with commercial fibres (contrary to the prevailing 'natural' aesthetic), to questioning whether the workshop was merely 'copying' paintings rather than carrying out original woven works (Cochrane, 1992, p. 289).

Towards the end of 1978, the VTW exhibited tapestries that had been produced during its first two years of work. The exhibition was titled *Tapestry and the Australian Painter*, and showcased works resulting from collaboration with fourteen of the twenty-five artists worked with. They included Roger Kemp, Alun Leach-Jones, Richard Larter, Jeffrey Smart, William Kelly, Jan Senbergs and Keith Looby. Walker had to again defend the tapestries as works of art in their own right, not copies. Cochrane (1992) noted that the weavers had interpreted the colours and textures of paint into an entirely new medium in order to invest the artist's original concept with the specific qualities of tapestry. The forming stage was completed when the VTW were able to employ predominately artists who were then trained as tapestry weavers.

⁷ 'Tapestry and its place in Contemporary Art Practice' Lecture delivered by VTW Director Sue Walker, 7/6/91, UTAS Art cassette NX65.A66 No. 91.12 Brn:500974.

Storming

The Victorian Tapestry Workshop built up its reputation through both professional commissions, and its collaborative interaction with contemporary Australian artists. The workshop also provided a greater awareness of tapestry, as an artistic medium, within the wider community. Mattessich, et al., (2004) noted that collaborative groups, particularly organisational ones, need to be perceived within the community as reliable, competent and as a legitimate leader within the community (p. 13). During the storming stage the VTW were still working towards this goal. In 1988, an International Tapestry Symposium was organised in Melbourne, to coincide with the completion of the VTW's first decade. Cochrane (1992) described the symposium as an opportunity to deliver and discuss major papers on topics such as textiles in architecture, the work of group studios, tapestry training, the history of tapestry in various cultures and periods, and the work of independent tapestry weavers. There were also major exhibitions which accompanied the symposium.⁸

As the VTW began to find a special place for themselves within the Australian arts community, they also had to confront the challenges of financial viability, particularly given the traditional devaluing of the crafts sector. The first national study of this sector titled *Visual & Craft Artists: A national study of the Australian Crafts and Visual Arts Industry* was conducted by Prosser in 1989.⁹ Amongst other things, the study revealed the extent of visual arts and craft practice in Australia, as well as statistics regarding the choice of art production, in terms of gender, and the disparity between earnings of men and women. There was also general concern expressed, in the study, about the nature and limited level of government support for visual artists and craftspeople. The VTW has been, and continues to be, subsidised to some extent

⁸ These exhibitions included international surveys, *World Tapestry Today*, *Studio Survey*, and an installation of miniatures. Australian exhibitions included tapestries from the VTW, and 2000 *Bobbins*, an exhibition of community tapestries.

⁹ This study showed that professional visual arts and craftspeople generated economic activity valued at \$520 million in 1987/88. This was achieved with total support from Federal and State governments of \$46 million, which was 9% of the turnover. Although 82% of practitioners were formally trained (over half of them at degree level), Prosser notes that the overwhelming majority did not earn a living wage from production of their artwork. The main art forms of professional artists and craftspeople at this time were painting and sculpture (31%), leather, paper and textiles (18%) and ceramics (17%). There were more women (54%) than men (46%) practising as professional visual artists and craftspeople. Men dominated wood and furniture making, painting and sculpture while women dominated leather, paper and textiles, and prints and drawings (pp 2 - 3). Males earned significantly more (\$19,175) than females (\$7,700).

by the Victorian government. As the current director Shears explained, this type of patronage has not been uncommon in tapestry production workshops:

You won't be surprised to hear that all tapestry workshops for the past six centuries have needed some form of subsidy for their operating overheads. Historically it was generally the courts of the great dukes, or wealthy secular patrons like the Medici, who were passionate about the arts and prepared to invest money in them. In more recent times, it has been governments who are the principal supporters of the arts, and in particular, it was the Victorian government in the 70s under the leadership of Premier Sir Rupert Hamer, a tremendous supporter of the arts himself, who led the support for the Victorian Tapestry Workshop and worked with our earliest and most devoted supporters to generate the funds for our foundation. Not surprisingly, there are very few workshops making contemporary tapestries in the world today. The famous Gobelin¹⁰ workshop in Paris is totally supported by the French government, as is the Beauvais workshop outside Paris. The Swedish government also supports a workshop in Stockholm. Private workshops are virtually unheard of, and one or two textile industries in Japan and Portugal maintain small workshops as a subsidised part of their business. Tapestry is a tremendously labour-intensive exercise and this is the major reason for the support required to produce it. We calculate that on average, a weaver produces one sixth of a square metre each week. This makes it very expensive to produce. And naturally there is a level at which clients would balk at tapestry prices – our prices cover all direct costs of production but we find it almost impossible to charge for overheads or profits.¹¹

A pivotal moment occurred in the VTW's early history with their commissioning of a tapestry for the new Parliament House, to be opened in 1988. The VTW was asked to interpret an Arthur Boyd painting to be hung in the Great Hall. The tapestry was nine

¹⁰ The Gobelins were a family of dyers, who in the middle of the 15th century established themselves in the Faubourg Saint Marcel, Paris. The Gobelin Workshop is best known as a royal factory supplying the court of Louis XIV and later monarchs. It is now run by the French Ministry of Culture as The Manufacture des Gobelins.

¹¹ Arts Forum Seminar delivered by Susie Shears, Academy of the Arts Gallery, UTAS, 13/7/06.

metres by twenty metres, which was sixteen times larger than the Boyd painting. At the time Matheson (1988) noted that the completion of the tapestry would mark the coming of age of the workshop. In the same article Walker also acknowledged how pivotal this tapestry was to the reputation of the VTW:

It marks a climax in our development as a tapestry studio. It has been an enormous challenge for us. But I think we've been equal to it. If we'd been given such a commission earlier in our development, it would have been extraordinarily daunting. But now we have the spirit, the vitality, and the motivation, and it's reflected in the tapestry. What we have done is very exciting for Australia. We've shown that a country without a tradition of tapestry can come to the forefront internationally. This has become the most successful and ambitious workshop of its kind in the world (p. 8).

During this storming stage the VTW had to constantly defend challenges against copying art works without input from the artist concerned. Its philosophy of engaging in collaboration was not accepted easily by the art world.

Norming

The VTW has secured its niche in Australia's cultural history, confirmed by its world-wide reputation as a centre for contemporary tapestry. As the current director Shears noted: 'It is regarded by many people as a national treasure, and has become a significant institution in the cultural fabric of Australia.'¹² Due to the fact that the VTW is a production weaving studio, it was vital for their success that the organisational structures worked effectively. The management structure of the VTW has undergone a number of changes since beginning in 1976. Currently, the Director, Susie Shears - who took over in December 2004 - answers to a Board of Directors which has fluctuated from between eight to eleven people. There are eight honorary positions on the board, with a range of people from a diverse number of fields such as architecture, finance, visual arts, textiles, languages and librarianship filling these positions. The next management level consists of three positions which are all equally weighted in terms of responsibility. These are a Studio Manager, an Assistant Director

¹² Arts Forum Seminar delivered by Susie Shears, Academy of the Arts Gallery, UTAS, 13/7/06.

(Finance) and another Assistant Director (Administration) who also assists the Studio Manager. Each of these people is answerable to the Director. The weavers, whose numbers fluctuate depending on the projects, all answer to the Studio Manager. The Administration Assistant reports to the Assistant Director (Administration) and two consultants, one of whom is an overseas marketing manager, and the other who has responsibility for publicity. Both of these consultants had previously reported to the Assistant Director (Administration), but now report to the Director.

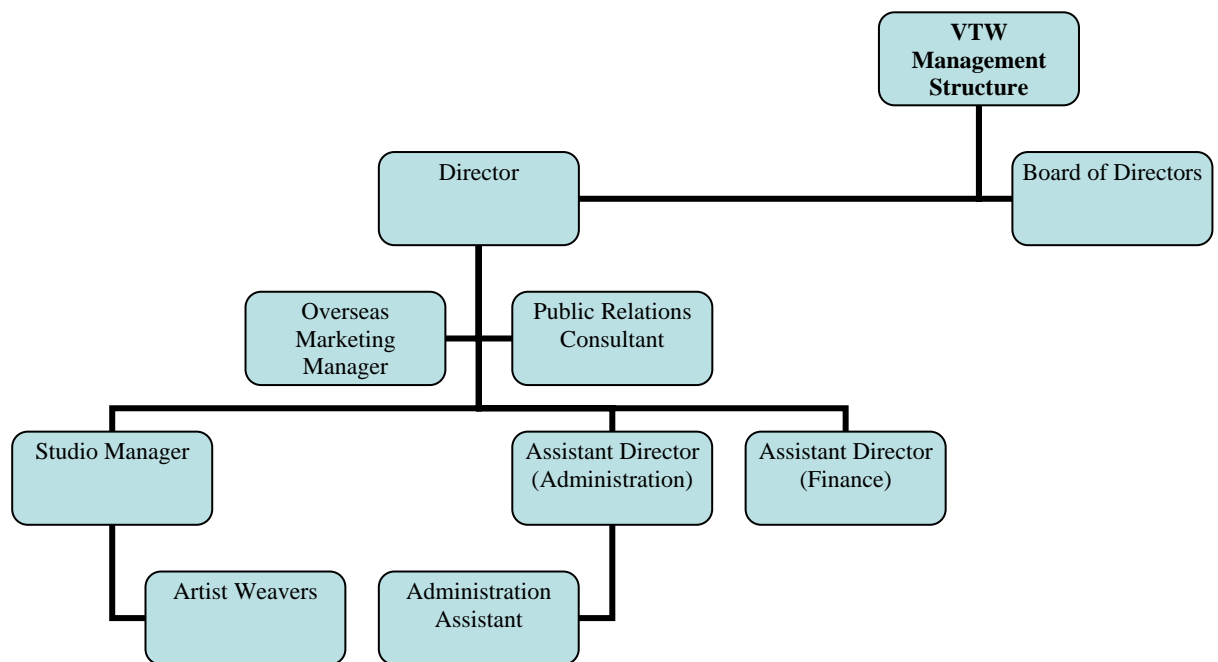


Figure 4: Management Structure of the Victorian Tapestry Workshop, January 2005

Roles are clearly defined in this management structure, and extensive planning is always undertaken before each tapestry commission, to ensure that the weavers were able to complete the tapestry on time and budget. As well as commissioned works, the VTW has also produced tapestries for its own collection.

In order to maintain a degree of vitality, artists are invited to undertake residencies at the VTW. I was fortunate to be invited for a three week period during November/December 2004. At this time the weavers had completed the first work for *The Embassy Collection*. This collection aims to place tapestries within Australian embassies all over the world. The weavers had also recently completed a monumental tapestry designed by the original Sydney Opera House architect Jørn Utzon for the

Opera House. This tapestry was fourteen metres in length and took ten months to complete. Concurrently, another tapestry designed by Indian artist Gulam Sheikh for the Asialink Centre in Melbourne was completed during my residency. The VTW were also working on a new work by Singaporean artist Ian Woo, which featured in an exhibition titled *The Art of Collaboration* during 2005 in Singapore.

As previously discussed, an important underpinning of the Victorian Tapestry Workshop is its skilled weavers are trained as fine artists. Due to their visual sensitivity and technical expertise, the VTW argues, the weavers are able to enter into a special form of collaboration with the artists whose designs they translate, not simply copy. Therefore, with this fine arts background they are able to ‘engage in fine art practice as contemporary artists rather than working as artisan craft weavers’ (VTW, 1996). The collaborative basis of the workshop has been mutually beneficial to both the weavers and the artists. During my residency, I was able to observe first-hand this process. As Grazyna Bleja the Director Elect of the VTW stated in her letter of invitation:

You will be welcome to share in the daily life of the studio, including taking part in Workshop meetings as an observer, bearing in mind the production deadlines that are an important aspect of our business. We generally find the shared experience between the artist/weavers and the visiting artist rewarding whereby all are able to gain some insight to one another’s work.¹³

The following observations for this case study were made during this time and contain both interviews, and informal observations of the process undertaken by the weavers. Brown (1991) noted that it is during the norming stage that members begin to feel their uniqueness as a group. He also stated that during the norming stage there was an increased ability to plan and carry out group projects (p. 72). At the VTW this was particularly noticeable when a new project commenced, whether it was commissioned, or was a work for the VTW exhibition collection. New groups had to

¹³ Letter of invitation from Grazyna Bleja, Director Elect VTW, 26/3/04.

be formed, but because each of the weavers knew each other so well, they moved swiftly from the norming to the performing stage.

Performing

At the time of my residency there were fourteen weavers, thirteen were female and one was male. The atmosphere was industrious, positive, encouraging and people often arrived early and stayed late to continue working on their tapestries. The weavers were willing to talk about the process they undertake throughout the creation of the tapestry, and particularly about the importance of collaboration between both the artist and weaver and amongst the weavers.¹⁴ The last two years had been very difficult for the VTW, as the Director Elect Grazyna Bleja, a well known weaver in her own right, has been unwell and unable to take over the Directorship as planned. The weavers have said this has created some uncertainty within the workshop; however it has not impeded their work. Whilst I was there several large projects were being undertaken. Once a design has been accepted to be woven by the VTW, a budget must be drawn up taking into account the work rates of the weavers and how much money has been allocated. At this point it has been necessary, in the past, to change the complexity or scale of some of the designs in order to work inside the budget. A project team is then assembled in which a senior weaver is appointed as a project leader to work with other experienced weavers and possibly a trainee. Sue Walker described the interpretation and weaving process as follows:

The weaver's role is to interpret the artist's designs into tapestries which carry the spirit and feeling of the original image, but which take on a new life in the tapestry medium as a result of the interpretative process.

Designs hang in the Workshop for some time before the interpretation begins. It is important to live with a work of art, to get to know it and to understand what it is saying. Other examples of the artist's work are studied, and a familiarity and trust develops between artist and weaver.

Colour strips are woven to establish the palette to be used. Woven colour

¹⁴ There are four levels in the structure of weaving expertise. Level One is the Trainee level and Level Four is where the most senior weavers with twenty plus years of weaving are situated. In 2005 the VTW created a Certified Agreement for the weavers and administration staff so they now respond to their own award. The weavers' rates of pay and subsequent increases are based on: Years of service; Assessment of achievements against the requirements of the Weaver Classification Structure; Outcome of end of project review; and Outcome of formal performance assessment.

is very different to paint and has wonderful qualities that can be exploited with great skill by an experienced weaver. Ideas about colour and tonal balance are discussed with the artist, as are issues relating to change in scale. Whilst an approach to the work has been established at the outset, the tapestry will soon take over and lead the team into new and unexpected directions. Indeed, the more the weaving progresses the more discussion is generated at the loom (1996).

In effect, as Walker stated, the process involved one set of artists interpreting the work of another artist. Through observation I considered that this process was similar to the way an artist may take photographs of a person, object, or landscape to which they would refer to when they transformed the image into another medium. During this process the weavers may change the colour palette, add or subtract particular features, or explore a number of possibilities before selecting the one that captured the essence of the image (Appendix 1I).

Each weaver was allocated an area to work on and given the opportunity to interpret the sample in their own way. Because the weavers were trained artists in their own right, they appeared – based on my observations – able to confidently undertake this process. After consideration of all the samples by the team leader, project team, and artist, one was chosen as the way to interpret and weave the overall design. At this point the skill and expertise of the weavers becomes paramount in explaining to the artist how particular optical effects and textures are obtained. Brennan (1980) described this collaboration between artist and weaver as an extension of the original, yet complete and entire in its own right. The VTW's philosophy has been that great tapestry was the result of the combined skills of the artist and the technical skills of the weavers. The weavers have to interpret what the artist has done, and transform it into something which retained the spirit of the artist, but which became another art form.¹⁵ The weavers preferred artists who did not try to impose textures and effects, but instead allowed the weavers to interpret ways in which particular textures and effects could be achieved.

¹⁵ When I spoke to the weavers they all agreed that if an artist simply wanted their work to be closely copied then they were mistaken in their attitude to tapestry.

The tapestry that the weavers Sue Batten and John Dicks worked on during my residency was an unfinished painting by Geoffrey Ricardo for Bairnsdale Hospital. Dicks described the process of collaboration as follows:

... we've tried to limit the palette, because there's an awful lot of colour in there, to keep it as vibrant, but to limit the palette so that it looks more like one of his prints, than like the oil work that is the original. And he gets really excited by what the weavers actually bring to the project. So he did this over a year ago, you know, and he keeps coming in and looking at it and going 'Ohhh, that's great, I love the way you're mixing the colours and all of that.' So you know it's a real kind of collaboration between the weavers and the artists. It's fabulous. A project presents you with a very different challenge, you know, so on this, the challenge is as you can see, mixing colour. What we try to do here all the time is to capture the essence of the artist.¹⁶

Their interpretation was to create an effect that was more familiar with Ricardo's printmaking style, and as such Batten and Dicks were delineating many of the areas which were blurred or not resolved in the painting Ricardo had given them. A comparison of the painting to the tapestry revealed that the palette has been heightened, and that the edges are much more defined than they were in the oil painting (Appendix 2N). Ricardo visited several times during the weaving of the tapestry, and initially commented that the colour samples were too cool, and the people depicted in the tapestry would look as if they were dying. A close examination of the painting however revealed that it does have a fairly cool palette, and the weavers have warmed and heightened the colour in the tapestry quite considerably.

Ricardo, who had developed a good working relationship over the years with the VTW, was very involved in every aspect of the process during the creation of *The Bairnsdale Tapestry*. *The Art of Collaboration* catalogue stated: 'There is a certain freedom in a long association, and now that the Victorian Tapestry Workshop has worked with artist Geoff Ricardo on a number of projects, there is mutual trust and

¹⁶ Interview with VTW weaver John Dicks at the VTW, 2/12/04, Melbourne, Victoria.

respect between Geoff and the weavers' (VTW, 2005). Ricardo also disclosed his admiration to me personally for the VTW and his confidence in their interpretation of his work.¹⁷ This development confirmed Walker's statement when she described the most conducive relationship between artist and weaver:

The artists who make the best tapestries are those who are prepared to give the workshop a cartoon that sets out the design that establishes the colour, the tone of the tapestry, and who then work with the weavers; and the weavers show them what sort of textures are possible. The artist determines which of those textures they'll use and, in an act of faith, then moves away and lets the people who have far greater skills in interpreting the work get on with the job (1996).

Many of the artists who have had work woven by the VTW also give an artist talk to all the weavers. This provides the weavers with an understanding of the direction and approach taken by the artist. This courtesy also respects the fact that they were both groups of artists, who are interested in seeing each other's work. During my initial visit to the VTW in February 2004, I had the opportunity to observe six tapestries being woven.¹⁸

During the last week of the residency in December 2004, *Mappamundi*, 360cm (h) x 360cm (w) woven by Caroline Tully, Amy Cornall and Cheryl Thornton was completed. Other tapestries in process during the residency were *Mutabolis* by the artist Christine Johnson, 110cm (h) x 202cm (w), woven by Amy Cornall and Milena Paplinska; *Forest Noise* by the artist Ian Woo, 140cm x 246cm, woven by Chris Cochius, Milly Formby and Hilary Green; *The Bairnsdale Tapestry*, by the artist Geoffery Ricardo, 230cm (h) x 267cm (w), woven by Sue Batten and John Dicks; and

¹⁷ Phone interview with artist Geoff Ricardo, 24/5/06.

¹⁸ The six tapestries observed during my first visit to the VTW were: *Mappamundi*, by the artist Gulam Sheikh, 300cm(h) x 360cm(w), destined for the Asialink Building at Melbourne University; *Untitled* by the artist Arlene Textaqueen, 78cm(h) x 56.5cm (w) destined for the VTW collection; *Untitled* by the artist David Slattery, 200cm(h) x 125cm(w) destined for Debney Park Secondary College; *Lumpu Lumpu Country* by the artist Daisy Andrews, 190cm(h) x 230cm(w), destined for the Australian Embassy in Tokyo; *Untitled* by the artist Margaret Stones, 210cm(h) x 140cm(w), destined for Government House in Victoria; and *The Diggers* by the artist David Larwill, 200cm(h) x 306cm(w), destined for Ballarat University.

Abstract Form by the artist Roger Kemp, 500cm (h) x 580cm (w), woven by Leonie Bessant, Irja West, Pam Joyce, and Rebecca Moulton.¹⁹

The large Roger Kemp tapestry was being completed to join three other tapestries interpreted from his paintings *Evolving Forms* (1984), *Piano Movement* (1988), and *Organic Form* (1990) currently on exhibition in the Great Hall at the National Gallery of Victoria. It took at least nine months to complete with the four weavers working full time. During the weaving process the large scale painting by Kemp was chained – due to its value – in close proximity to the tapestry, which allowed the weavers to constantly observe the painting and to check particular details such as colour variations. Every few weeks the weavers rotated to different positions so that one weaver's technique was not prominent. This was to achieve a sense of unity in terms of technique throughout the weaving. A weaver's technique is considered similar to having a particular painting style, and the weavers are able to easily identify who has woven which section. However, when they work on various sections, the styles blend to give a uniform appearance of having been woven by the same weaver.

The first of the Kemp paintings for the Great Hall was woven in 1978 and the subsequent tapestries have been completed as funding has allowed. Leonie Bessant, the project leader, who worked on the original Kemp tapestry was called back to the VTW because of her intimate knowledge of the style and construction of the other three Kemp tapestries. The four weavers who worked on the Kemp tapestry during the residency often discussed the colour combinations they were using with one another, and, at times, unwound the tapestry to obtain a better overall view of how the work was coming together. During my residency they would congregate on the viewing platform, situated above and adjacent to the looms, a number of times each week to discuss the interpretation of the painting. During my time at the VTW, the late Roger Kemp's daughter visited to ensure that the integrity of her father's artistic vision was maintained throughout the project. She spent quite some time with the weavers observing, both the artwork and the tapestry from the viewing platform, and discussing the colour combinations and approaches the weavers were taking.

¹⁹ See Appendix 1J for an interior view of the VTW during Dec, 2004.

Another project being woven at the time was a painting by the Singaporean artist, Ian Woo. He worked with the weavers by distance, commenting on the samples they had sent him. He also provided feedback on the scale and tonal variations they were to employ. When asked how she was able to keep perspective on this large scale project, the weaver Chris Cochiu replied:

I think that's probably the skill that we all have, that we can actually see beyond the small part that we're working and into a much bigger work of art. The work of art that we're working on has actually been blown up eight times the tapestry, the tapestry's eight times the size of the original artwork, which is quite a big jump, and so we have to take that into account, how strong we make the colours and how we simplify some areas and put more detail into others. So it's just a question of trying to be honest to the artist who we've met and who has given a talk here, and we've had quite a lot of dialogue with him originally. That's what we're trying to do, is trying to just bring their work into a different medium and still stay true and honest to their original intent (Bartholomew, 2004).

Some artists, however, were sceptical that the workshop can actually emulate some of the painterly techniques that had been employed. The artist Gareth Sansom initially refused to allow the VTW to translate his work into tapestry. Sansom recalled he did not think his paintings could be adequately portrayed in the tapestry medium. He used every complicated stylistic device he could muster and was complementary about what the VTW produced. He conceded that: '... they absolutely pulled it off. They worked out how to do drips, spots, stains, spray. *Family Trust* is three times larger than the painting I gave them and it's very powerful, fantastic' (Walker, 1996).

The group leader who interprets the tapestry draws a cartoon which has to mediate the gap between the eventual translation and the original. Considerable time is spent on the cartoon, because it is the only time during the actual process where the image can be considered in its entirety. Walker described this process as follows:

Drawing a cartoon is similar to making a map, surveying and recording the ground of the image, its structure and physicality. It affords the

opportunity to strip the work of its surface embellishment in order to concentrate on the overall structure. This is critical in weaving as the realisation of the image is limited by the need to construct each component to a finished stage before proceeding to the next (Walker, 1996).

The cartoon is then shown to the weaving team, who then weave various sections of the piece to construct samples. When these decisions are finalised, the cartoon is placed behind the warp threads on the tapestry loom and both the front and back of the warp is inked with a fine paintbrush. Inking both sides of the warp overcomes the possibility that the design will be lost through warps twisting during the weaving.

Another large tapestry completed during my residency was based on a computer collage by the Indian artist Gulam Sheikh called *Mappamundi*. Four weavers worked on this project for the Asialink Building in Melbourne. When asked how the labour was divided on such a large project, Caroline Tully, one of the weavers replied:

Well, sometimes we just do the bits we like, it's not necessarily whether you're good at something or not, but on this because there's room to move around we sort of go with our favourite bits. But sometimes we have to do bits we don't really like that much, and that are harder (Walker, 1996).

This comment revealed that although the weavers have a group leader, they are all encouraged to share the more difficult or tedious parts with their weaving team.

The painter John Coburn described his collaboration with the Workshop weavers as a unique blend of trust and empathy. His experience with the tapestry medium was extensive due to his long association with the French Aubusson workshop²⁰, which has, since the mid 1960s, produced seventy tapestries of his work. His praise for the

²⁰ The Aubusson Workshop in France is well-known for its tapestries and carpets which have been famous throughout the world since the 14th Century. It originated with the arrival of weavers from Flanders, who took refuge in Aubusson around 1580. In the 17th Century, the Aubusson workshop were given "Royal Appointment" status. A downturn in fortunes came after the French revolution with the arrival of wallpaper. During the 1930s tapestry became more popular and artists such as Cocteau, Dufy, Dali, Braque, Calder and Picasso were invited to Aubusson to express themselves through the medium of wool.

VTW, however, surpasses his experiences with the Aubusson workshop. He noted that at Abusson the weavers are apprenticed at fifteen. In comparison the weavers at the VTW are graduates of art colleges, and can therefore ‘put in more creative content into their work’ (Clabburn, 1995, p. 36). Although Coburn likened the VTW weavers to artists, there is a necessary amount of pre-planning before a tapestry is begun. The popular image of the artist working moving back and forth across a canvas is contrasted with the systematic approach used by the weavers. The weavers are required to have a clear overview of the tapestry, and many of the choices which artists work through during the creation of their work are decided at the VTW beforehand.

This section has provided a brief overview of how the VTW has reached and maintained the performing stage in their group formation. Due to their financial obligations the VTW have necessarily instituted an efficient and effective system for completing tapestries. Although there are instances where collaboration does occur, it appeared that there were some factors which have subverted sincere attempts to engage in this process.

Responses to the Interview Schedule

The interviews with the Victorian Tapestry Workshop weavers were conducted during my residency in November/December 2004. The interview with the director Susie Shears took place in October 2005. During these interviews we discussed a number of issues which were guided by the interview schedule outlined in chapter four. When asked to describe what the term collaboration means to them, the participants were quite clear on how it related to their process within the VTW. Because the philosophy of the workshop has always been based on the collaborative process, it would seem a reasonable assumption that much discussion had taken place about how it was engaged in at the VTW. The level of collaboration between the artist and the VTW seemed to fluctuate, depending on any prior relationship established with the artist, their geographical distance to the VTW and the artist’s personality.

Collaboration

When asked to explain the term collaboration, the VTW director, Shears referred to it as a process which benefited both the weavers and the artist:

I suppose, ah we'd look at from both points of view, from ours and the artists. Ah, and I'm often thinking about how artists in the past have reacted to collaboration with the workshop and the weavers. That they feel they've had as much input into their own work and their work outside the workshop as the weavers do. But it certainly isn't a case of the weavers learning from the artist only, um, but the learning, the transfer of ideas happens in both directions, and ah what the artist finds, often to their surprise, and there's lots of documentary cases of where that surprise has been recorded um, that the, what the artist gains from the experience has been very significant for their own work – art practice, and ah, that the experience in toto, has been a very positive one.²¹

During the Arts Seminar at the School of Visual and Performing Arts, and just prior to the opening of the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition, Shears reiterated the collaborative philosophy of the workshop, but interestingly referred to working co-operatively, which in some cases appeared to be a more accurate description of what occurred at the VTW:

The Workshop established a doctrine of artistic collaboration from its beginnings in the mid 1970s and it is still a unique aspect of the Workshop's operations, as is the emphasis on working with living artists. We repeatedly find the interaction between the artists and the weavers to be immensely stimulating and invigorating on both sides. The Workshop does in fact very rarely make a tapestry without the close involvement of the artist. More typically, the Workshop deters clients from working with images from the past, or with designs by artists who are no longer alive. Our view is that we are not in the business of replicating works from history, but thrive on the dynamics of working co-operatively, and engendering that tremendous sense of energy and passion that comes from a truly collaborative approach.

²¹ Interview with VTW Director Susie Shears at the VTW, Melbourne, 19/10/05.

One of the weavers, Irja West, who has been weaving for over fifty years, explained that in order to collaborate the weavers had to start the process by examining the artist's works to obtain a feel for their style. The weaver would then meet with the artist and talk about the impetus behind their artistic work, and the types of issues the artist was dealing with. West also explained, that the collaborative process worked particularly well if there was a bit of 'give and take' between the artist and the weaver. She found it difficult to define collaboration, preferring to discuss how the process eventuated in the tapestries she created.²²

John Dicks began working at the VTW in January, 2003, first via a residency and then as a trainee in March of that year.²³ He worked with Sue Batten on the Bairnsdale Tapestry. Dicks had been an actor and director in both the United Kingdom and Australia from 1970 until 2000.²⁴ His responses sometimes alluded to the acting process to explain the collaborative process. When asked if he could describe collaboration Dicks replied:

Well collaboration is a work of art I think that is interpreted by another artist. I've worked for a long time as an actor. I was an actor and a director, and I was involved in the process of interpreting the spoken word. But now that I've moved over to tapestry, I'm actually interpreting the visual image. So, there are lots of things in that collaborative process which are quite similar. You know like dealing with the actual artist, or dealing with the writer. I think the important thing for the collaboration process is that the artist whose work is being interpreted has to let go of the particular art work. They have to realise that it's going somewhere else. Like the play has to be interpreted by actors, characters have to be interpreted by actors and the play by a director. And in terms of weaving, the artwork has to be interpreted by the weavers. That doesn't mean to say that it has to be totally different you know from the original art work. It

²² Interview with VTW weaver Irja West, VTW, Melbourne, 2/12/04.

²³ Since joining the Workshop John has worked on a number of projects including David Larwill's *Diggers* for Ballarat University and the Debney Park school tapestry.

²⁴ John Dicks appeared in the second Star Wars movie the 'Empire Strikes Back' and was still receiving fan mail during my residency.

has to express the spirit of that art work. It's not just a copy of a particular, you know, artist's work.²⁵

Sue Batten²⁶ also acknowledged the importance of a good relationship between the artist and the weavers:

... and I think as many artists do who work with us over a period of time, they get to the point where in fact you've got a confidence in the workshop where they feel like we actually know their work well enough that we can sort of draw out the essence of their work while at the same time move on and make a tapestry. So it's not a copy, it's really a liberating experience for the weavers, because in fact you're given a licence in a way to move that work on so it's really an interpretive process – so it's not just about collaboration, it's about interpretation.²⁷

In the same way that an artist has a particular style or technique, so do the weavers. Batten revealed that each weaver would interpret an art work differently from another weaver at the VTW. She also stated that the collaborative process does not just occur between the artist and the weavers, but also between the weavers themselves:

So you're not only collaborating with an artist, you're also collaborating with your co-weavers. So, on every level, [laughs] that's in fact, that's in fact, the real challenge of the place. Because it would in many ways it would be easy to copy work, it's much more difficult to make those decisions. Because in fact, well through the sample process, and the discussion processes, you have to get to the point where you are so confident in your vision, and your, and that's through the process of talking with the artist, through samples, through talking to your co-weavers, talking to clients quite often, you have to have, right from that word go, that clear vision of what you're going to do. And that's really

²⁵ Interview with VTW weaver John Dicks, VTW, Melbourne, 2/12/04.

²⁶ Batten's interest in and passion for tapestry began, when she learnt to weave at the VTW during work experience in 1976. She studied at Melbourne State College and RMIT. More recently, in 1999, Batten undertook further study at Monash University where she worked in the Tapestry Studio in the Department of Fine Arts.

²⁷ Interview with VTW weaver Sue Batten, VTW Melbourne, 1/12/04.

hard because the artwork you're looking at is not exactly the same as what the tapestry is going to be.

Through further questioning about the collaborative process, Batten revealed how the VTW's approach to tapestry cannot be attributed to merely copying an artist's work. She noted that the palette and scale of the finished work was often changed, and although the finished tapestry had the appearance of the artist's work, it changed substantially through its interpretation into tapestry:

MB: And you're constantly making decisions as you're weaving?

SB: Absolutely. So, you know, usually what happens before you start, is you establish a sort of feel, a palette, and that's really done by you know, by deconstructing the work and working out what's important, and thinking about colours and the scale, and then that's very often we have to you know change the tone of the work because if it's going to be really big sometimes you know you need to strengthen the colours, or you need to strengthen the contrasts or all sorts of things, that you're working from a tiny work and it's going to be huge, you can't necessarily ...

MB: Leave it the way it was.

SB: No. And the other thing that we take into consideration very often is where, we don't always have this luxury, but very often with commissioned work we know where a tapestry is going to hang, so you have that idea of how much detail you should put in there, or what sort of you know environment it's going to be in, so what's important as far as the actual technical decisions you can make.

MB: And who determines the scale?

SB: Usually, well if it's with a commission that's the client. Usually they have a wall they want to hang it on.

MB: Oh, of course yes.

SB: But with the exhibition collection what we do is very often get a slide of a work, we know we want to weave, and blow it up on a wall and see where it works best. Because some, it varies incredibly, because sometimes you know the artworks scream out that they want to be huge

and other times they don't work on a huge scale, they're better to be more intimate. So that varies a lot, I mean, so there's so many decisions.

MB: All the time.

SB: I think it's, the whole, the sad thing, when people sort of talk about tapestries being copies is, it's sad, because in fact if you do get the opportunity to look at the artworks and the tapestries, there's no way you could come to that conclusion. I think the thing about it is, because we work with artists, it's important that we retain the essence of their work, as I said before, so of course a Geoff Ricardo tapestry is going to look like Geoff Ricardo's work, but it's not a painting and it's not a print, it's a tapestry.

Rachel Hine²⁸ described a recent tapestry she had woven for an artist, and explained how she felt the collaborative process had occurred during this time:

... we chose a painting that showed a good deal of character about her artwork. But it wasn't quite suitable enough for a tapestry, something about it was a little too touristy, too gimmicky, she uses lots of little animals and critters in her work. I didn't really think that was appropriate so we chose a sketch, a good sketch that was made at around the same time as the painting was painted, so we used the sketch as the line work, the skeleton I guess. The colours we took from the painting which was the palette, and the little sketch was the artwork. So we actually created a new artwork together by discussing the colours and me applying them and she then would say 'Yes, this is a good colour' or 'I think this colour should have a little more yellow or a little more green.' So there was that interaction and she would come and visit periodically. She didn't come in all the time, she came in and talked about things maybe twice, but she was satisfied that the decisions I made were appropriate and in the end it did make a tapestry that was a stand alone artwork. Not a copy, and not like a

²⁸ Rachel Hine was a trainee weaver who graduated from Monash University with a Masters in Fine Art in 2003. She had gained her Bachelor of Fine Art (Honours) from Monash in 1999. Prior to this she studied at the Gordon Technical College in Geelong and completed an Advanced Certificate of Art and Design.

sketch. I didn't make it up on my own so I guess that is the ideal situation for collaboration.²⁹

This extract demonstrates the equal standing, perceived by Hine, of both the artist and weaver in the process of interpreting an art work into tapestry. It began with the choice of work, proceeded to the discussion, selection and determination of colour, and resulted in the creation of an entirely new artwork both in terms of composition and medium.

During our interview, I asked Chris Cochius³⁰ the project leader for Singaporean artist Ian Woo's *Forest Noise* if she could explain what the term collaboration meant:

Collaboration, well basically it's working together. It's often coming from different points of view, but trying to make something that will bring those points of view together. In this case it's two different art forms, and its bringing those two different ideas, which result because of the different mediums, and trying to assimilate them.³¹

The two different art forms Cochius was referring to were the artwork and the tapestry, and she described equal participation as being an intrinsic part of collaboration. I then asked Cochius if the VTW copied work, or if the process was more complicated than that:

²⁹ Interview with VTW weaver Rachel Hine, VTW, Melbourne, 1/12/04.

³⁰ Chris Cochius's first practical introduction to tapestry was in a subject in her Environmental Design degree. She became involved in the Crafers 30 Community Tapestry in Adelaide during 1982, and was inspired by Kay Lawrence who co-ordinated the tapestry project. Cochius later worked with Kay Lawrence on the tapestry *Two Hills – Two Years* which now hangs in the Australian High Commission in Dacca, Bangladesh. Cochius began working at the Victorian Tapestry Workshop in June 1983 and has had extended periods of leave for child care, travel and education. From 1986 to 1987 she worked at the West Dean Tapestry Studio in the UK, weaving *Shelter Drawing* by Henry Moore. Cochius also visited the great tapestry centres and collections in France and Scotland. During her time at the VTW she has worked on twenty five different projects. Cochius also participated as part of the team who wove the monumental Sydney Opera House tapestry designed by Jørn Utzon and now installed in the refurbished interior of the Opera House. She was project leader for Singaporean artist Ian Woo's *Forest Noise* and Margaret Stone's flower tapestries now in Government House in Victoria.

³¹ Interview with VTW weaver Chris Cochius, VTW, Melbourne, 2/12/04.

No, well we usually have quite a lot of input from the artist, I mean usually, but it's not always the case. And the best experiences are when the artist is as interested in the processes as we are. In terms of copying, there's no way you can say we are copying because for a start it's usually a considerable increase in size. This one for example was eight times the size of the original art work, so you can't copy it because suddenly the lines mean something completely different. So, the aim on this job is to basically, having spent some time seeing a lot of Ian Woo's work, and he came in and gave a talk, and then he talked specifically, and I had a talk to him specifically about this artwork, it's trying to retain the ideals he has as an artist. The things that are really important to him, whether it's colour or line, or whatever it is. And make sure that's the thing we have that's evident in the work. So, I mean if you were to look closely there are definite things that we've left out or exaggerated so that it's not seen as a copy, but so that his intent is true.

Cochius's response revealed an important aspect of the collaborative nature of the workshop. The scale of work, whether minimised or enlarged does affect particular design elements, resulting in a different effect portrayed by the artist. She did note however that the experience was affected by the interest of the artist in the collaborative process. This comment revealed that perhaps some of the tapestries were completed with little involvement by the artist. Cochius then explained how she had to interpret the particular quality of gouache on paper to achieve the effect she was seeking:

This is gouache on paper, and so for me it's really important that we don't have very flecky mixes, all the mixes are honest interpretations of the colour, and so we colour scribed the colours, we actually looked at the colour and made that colour, rather than making an interlock of the colours in a mixed bobbin. I mean that's not an easier approach, it's easier if you do a mixed bobbin. And you get a transference by that, by altering the weight of which colours are predominant on the bobbin. But for his work, I don't think it's appropriate. I mean that's my personal opinion, I don't think it's appropriate.

Another interview occurred during the weaving of the Kemp tapestry and necessarily became a group interview conducted with the weavers working together on that day. The weavers were Rebecca Moulton, Leonie Bessant, and Pam Joyce.³² When asked about the collaborative process of the workshop, Moulton replied that people believed that the weavers copy the work of artist's, which belied their understanding of how the VTW operates. Her response linked to the area of acknowledgment:

Sometimes people don't understand what we do here. The impression is that we are just here to copy because the weavers don't get the recognition, people who don't have any knowledge about the workshop, they don't even understand what our role is as weavers. In that process of interpretation and collaboration, so unless we're acknowledged then people don't know what we are doing.³³

Later when I mentioned that I had seen documentation in the catalogues where the VTW had labelled particular works with 'designed by' and 'interpreted by,' Moulton responded by saying that this acknowledgement seemed to 'fluctuate.' A revealing article in *Artlink* by Sue Green (2005) described another weaver's experience at the VTW and went some way to explaining what Moulton did not wish to elaborate on:

³² Rebecca Moulton completed a Bachelor of Fine Art (Tapestry) at Monash University in 1994 and, subsequently, obtained a Graduate Diploma in Art and Entertainment Management at Deakin University in 2001. Moulton began working at the VTW in February, 1995. She had worked on a number of projects, including one of the Melbourne Airport tapestries designed by Leonie Bessant, two panels from the Federation suite at the Melbourne Museum and the fourth Kemp tapestry for the Great Hall at the National Gallery of Victoria. In 1994 Moulton won the National Gallery of Victoria Trustee's Student Award. She also was awarded the Sidney Myer Scholarship to attend the White Nights Textile Symposium in St Petersburg, Russia in 1997, and travelled through Britain, Europe and the USA. Following in 1999 Moulton was awarded the Helen Schutt Scholarship. Pamela Joyce became interested in textiles and particularly tapestry, during her teacher training where she took a double major in art. She originally began her career as an interpretative weaver at the VTW in 1980 and worked on a variety of projects until 1988. In 1988 she accepted a private commission from the Union of Turkish Workers for a bi-centennial project of six tapestries called *2 cities 2 cultures*. She wove these tapestries in conjunction with two other weavers. In 1985 and 1986 she studied tapestry and flat textile conservation with Tina Kane from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. From 1988 until 2001 she ran her own textile conservation business in partnership with Elizabeth Pilven. Their work included advice, restoration and cleaning for a range of private, corporate and government clients. Pamela returned to the Workshop in 2001 and has worked on the MCG tapestry and the Jørn Utzon tapestry for the refurbished Sydney Opera House.

³³ Interview with VTW weavers Leonie Bessant, Pam Joyce, and Rebecca Moulton, VTW, Melbourne, 1/12/04.

Tapestry weaver Joy Smith has had the opposite experience: for 15 years at the Victorian Tapestry Workshop she had her hands on the loom, but someone else made key artistic decisions, with the weavers weaving pictures drawing by visual artists. Workshop director Sue Walker encouraged the weavers to think of themselves as artists. She wanted the visual artists to see them that way too, but just how much acknowledgement they were given varied greatly between artists and clients, with some treating them simply as artisans (p. 58).

During the interviews the weavers described the type of artists they liked to work with, but it appeared that some artists may not have engaged in the collaborative spirit of the workshop, resulting in situations in which the weavers felt devalued.

Leonie Bessant has worked with the VTW for many years, and has been called upon when special projects have been commissioned. When asked about collaboration she essentially described it as working together, but then voluntarily discussed the economic value of the weavers' labour:

Just look at the wages people get paid here. It's not valued in terms of monetary exchange. The status of the weavers is not high. Yeah? [looking at other weavers for confirmation]. So if you were going to use the workshop to say the whole notion of collaboration is got higher status, it probably wouldn't be true. But I mean the collaboration in the tapestry workshop like this is no different from the collaboration in a tapestry workshop 2000 years ago. Centuries. It's a very similar process. By nature it's the act, it's a collaborative act. You act collaboratively because we're working together, it's a whole. It's a separate issue from the status of collaboration as a function and ... it's a separate thing.

The monetary exchange which occurs at the VTW raises a number of interesting issues concerning the perception of artist in society. The individual genius myth has located artists outside of society. Working in a production studio necessitates the fulfilment of particular duties by both the VTW management and the weavers. The VTW management expects the weavers to fulfil their weaving contracts, and the

weavers expect to be paid for their weaving. Placing artistic labour as a form of monetary exchange creates a paradox to the traditional image of the artist. During the interview Bessant voluntarily raised the issue of wages again noting that wages are an indication of how society values something. She felt that the wages earned by the weavers did not reflect the value of their work. This then initiated a further discussion concerning the issue that men appear to earn more than women, which related to the second section of the interview schedule concerning gender.

Gender

As the VTW consists predominately of women weavers, I asked the director Susie Shears the reasons for this:

Well a number of our staff, in fact the majority, of them have come out of art school, and often trained in fine arts, painting in many cases, textiles in others ... um, maybe it's a reflection of the pool of people that we're drawing on, in terms of that graduate pool. Um, yes John's the only man.

When I asked Irja West about gender issues at the VTW, she said that her experience was that men were not quite as forgiving as women and they preferred to be in charge, and so, therefore, a collaborative process may not be suitable for particular types of men. She also noted that there had not been many men employed at the VTW and the ones who had did not seem to last more than a few years: 'So it takes a different kind of man to cope with this.'

As the only male weaver in the workshop, I was interested to hear John Dicks' view regarding gender issues at the VTW. He described the different social expectations of men, particularly in regards to being the breadwinner of the family, and also referred to his own intrinsic motivation:

I've worked here, and there are no other male weavers, I'm the only one, but the reason for that, I guess there are several reasons for that. Generally if you are a man you seem to have more responsibilities, but I live by myself, and I don't really have a great deal of responsibility. I have a mortgage, but I'm much more interested in being stimulated as a person in

the work that I do. I mean any kind of huge financial reward... I mean I like to be able to travel, I like to be able to do certain things, but I'm not extravagant... I'd much rather love the work that I do. To look forward to each day that I come in ... to be creative and stimulated.

Dicks response appeared to be typical of creative people who pursue their art form often eschewing greater financial rewards to do so. His statement also revealed that tapestry weaving was emotionally satisfying, but not financially so. Dicks also referred to societal expectations of men concerning their ability to provide for their families. As a single male Dicks has been able to pursue creative outlets – acting and tapestry weaving – thus avoiding a social stereotype.

When asked about gender issues in the workshop, Batten initially referred to Dicks who also worked on *The Bairnsdale Tapestry*:

Well John's come from an acting background though, and I think he's actually been used to the collaborative process ... he's basically come from that, he said it's much easier because the egos aren't as big as in acting. [Laughter] So that's interesting, but I just, I really don't know. I'm not really qualified to tackle that. But I've worked with men over the years and I don't think it's a particularly gender thing, I think it's more of a type of character, because there are women who have worked in here who have been very difficult to work with too. We have, there's been times when it's been very difficult. So, I don't think it's fair to say.

Cochius reiterated Batten's comment that it was a certain character or temperament that ultimately enables a person to be able to collaborate. She also raised another important issue of ego which related to how a weaver makes the work their own without detracting from the integrity of the original artwork:

I mean in all the time I've probably worked with women. I've worked overseas and that was just with women, and here, although there has been, let me see, I've worked with Pat's husband a bit, on a job and he and I worked really well together. I just think it takes a certain type of person, I

don't think it's really gender-based. I think it's just a way of looking at things and I think there are a whole lot of reasons that there are more females than males in this industry, and I would say they really don't have very much to do with collaboration. I think that really it's just a particular type of person who can work as a production weaver and, your I guess, your ability to find challenges in something without being frustrated that it's not your own work. To make it enough of your own and still retain the integrity of the original. So, I think that it's not that it's necessarily male or female, there have been some really good males that have been through here, and I think there are a whole lot of other factors ...

Cochius's reference to the importance of retaining authorship of the tapestry itself was revealing, and indicated that the weavers do consider the tapestry to be a work which contained enough of their input to be acknowledged. Cochius also stated that social and cultural factors could play a part in whether men chose to work as tapestry weavers:

... financial is a really big thing. And I think a lot of men will tend to concentrate on, will end up trying to find a career where they can sort of earn enough, rather than to try to follow their passion, and I think that's just a society-based thing. I don't think that's necessarily ... it's just the way they are. I think it's just the way they're sort of pushed really.

Bessant stated: 'If this place had more men, it would have more power.' The other weavers seemed to agree with Bessant, but nobody else vocalised this particular opinion. Hine did not believe that there were any gender issues at the VTW, and she said she enjoyed working with the women at the workshop because they were all wonderful people:

I don't really think of things in terms of working with women or men ... or ... and I don't really think of it in those terms. I never consciously thought about that it's so excellent to work with a whole bunch of women on one thing. I enjoy it, most of the time. But that's not to do with collaboration, that's to do with all talking about something funny, or

having this sense of companionship. Especially here where you've got all the different ages and experiences together. You can learn all sorts of crazy stuff. So as far as collaboration goes, I don't really think of it, it doesn't cross my mind, as far as working with women and collaborating. It's never been part of my thinking.

The weaver's responses as to whether gender affected the collaborative process raised issues regarding the social and cultural stereotypes of men and women. It appeared that the general consensus was gender issues were not an issue at the VTW, although Bessant's interview raising some interesting concerns.

Acknowledgment

The issue of acknowledgment was not raised during the interviews as it had been anecdotally discussed with the weavers. The catalogues and books produced by the VTW always acknowledged who interpreted the tapestry and who the weavers were on the project. Moulton had voluntarily said that it was important the weavers were acknowledged, however she felt the acknowledgment seemed to be inconsistent. She has worked at the VTW since 1995 when catalogues at that time show that weavers were acknowledged. Moulton may have been referring to an earlier time when the VTW was in its forming stage. Overall, the weavers were pleased to see their names documented, and felt that this was deserved. The fact that they weave the artist's signature onto the front of the tapestry, in addition to the VTW logo, and their initials into the hem where they cannot be seen was revealing. However, placing the weavers' initials in the hem is a tradition in tapestry weaving. It was also interesting to note that even though the tapestry is seen as an entirely new art work, the artist still retains primacy of position in documentation.

Phenomenological Essence

The collaborative process is claimed by the VTW to underpin its identity and philosophy, and has contributed to its perceived sense of uniqueness. At the VTW, collaboration has been and continues to be seen as an important communication process. Some artists who have worked with the weavers have recognised that their art work was one step in the collaborative process, and in reality believed that it was a work in progress. Most artists were respectful of the weavers' expertise, and

experience, in obtaining particular effects through thread. The artists and weavers learnt from one another, and generally, this interaction has been a positive experience. Commitment from each person in the collaborative process has been absolutely essential to its success; and was contingent on time, energy and the upholding of both the image and perception of all participants. In this respect there was a great deal of preparation undertaken beforehand by the weavers and the VTW, to ensure that the artist had the required ‘collaborative spirit.’

The weavers also spent time immersed in the study of other works by the artists to obtain a feeling for their work. The weavers’ interpretation has been affected by their experience, aesthetics and technical abilities. In this process it was also important that the weavers were able to produce a tapestry which had something of their own artistic sensibilities inherent in it, yet still provoked a positive reaction from the artist. The resulting third entity is something that combines both sets of expertise, which neither participant could have created individually. Collaboration, in this sense, was the assimilation of two different, but in some cases artificially allied, points of view to create something artistically interesting. Even given such extensive preparation, the weavers still become nervous with regard to the reaction an artist may have to their interpretation. The weavers prefer to work with artists who were flexible and are willing to compromise. In the view of the VTW, an ideal artist does not let their ego impede the fact that the tapestry of their art work will be different. Artists feel more confident when they have worked with the VTW before, and were, therefore, aware of the process they will be engaged in. Artists have said that working with the VTW had extended their own work. The weavers noted that any collaborative experience varies, depending on who you work with.

The weavers enjoyed the social aspects of the workshop and revealed they did not predominately work there for financial reward, but because of the creative and stimulating environment. They also enjoyed the constant challenges from working in a group situation. The weavers were supportive of one another, and were able to challenge decisions in an open and trusting atmosphere. They have been disappointed when they hear that people think they have copied art work. In order to dispel this perception they suggested that people need to spend time with them, listen to their

discussions and observe what they do to really understand the intricacies of the collaborative process.

Although the majority of weavers were aware of the social and historical significance of working in a tapestry workshop environment, the pressures inherent in completing a tapestry on time and on budget were paramount. This necessarily created an artificial aspect to the collaborative process. Despite the fact that initial interpretation and colour samples were discussed with the artists, there were long periods when the weavers worked without further input from the artist. The time consuming nature of tapestry weaving appeared to circumvent the collaborative process.

Conclusion

The permanence of tapestry weaving can prevent a critical examination of the collaborative philosophy of the VTW. Collaboration relies on constant and challenging communication to operate effectively. This can only occur between the artist and the weavers at the initial stage of the tapestry commission. The word collaboration in contemporary art has often used to describe practices which are not collaborative, but co-operative. The method of working co-operatively means that people may discuss an idea together, but then delegate certain sections which they or others work on independently. This may occur when one person conceptualises an idea, other people develop the design in consultation with this person, and another group of people produce the design in consultation with the designers. Collaborative processes involve people working together to initiate and develop an idea, then bringing the concept to fruition, so that everyone has been equally engaged in the design and making of the work. There are also times when a project may begin independently with the artist and designer, but then evolves collaboratively during the making of the work, when the skills of other people are required by the artist. The artist or designer will then work closely with these people to ensure the integrity of their design was not compromised, and in the process develops an understanding of skills that they may not be familiar with. However, beginning a collaborative process with a pre-conceived design creates a guild or workshop situation in which participants are being utilised for their skills. The process cannot be described as being collaborative, if there are not genuine opportunities to modify or re-interpret the design.

Although the weavers were able to consult with the principal artist, they were already working with a pre-conceived design into which they did not have initial input. This lack of initial input also occurred with the Parliament House Embroidery. The embroiderers have had to learn the skills of interpretation, and how to translate the sensibility of the artist to the design. The VTW weavers had, in the majority, undertaken formal artistic training, although, contrary to expectations, this did not translate into greater input at the design stage. The use of the weavers highly developed skills and technical expertise were vital in being able to interpret the artist's work. Although the artist relied heavily on the weavers to communicate how particular surface treatments would manifest themselves in the work, they retained a distinct identity to the weavers. The VTW has been acknowledged as being unique in its approach to working with contemporary artists, in a collaborative manner. Despite the rhetoric, espoused by the majority of the participants in this case study, it became clear that many of the processes could be more accurately described as being more cooperative, than exclusively collaborative.

Chapter 7: Curatorial Case Study – *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition (POP)

The *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition opened on 13 July, 2006 and concluded on 10 September, 2006. This exhibition was a special curatorial project within the wider investigation of this study. The venue was the Academy Gallery, School of Visual and Performing Arts (SVPA), at the Inveresk campus of the University of Tasmania. The four groups of artists selected for the exhibition were: Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford from the Turpin Crawford Studio; Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd from the fashion label S/X; Hobart artist John Vella with Tasmanian students; and weavers Sue Batten and John Dicks from the Victorian Tapestry Workshop, in conjunction with the artist Geoffrey Ricardo. This case study will examine the collaborative process of bringing the exhibition together. This examination investigated how relationships were established between the artists, their support staff, the exhibition curator (myself) and the gallery director. As such it formed a vital component of my overall project, and revealed many dimensions of collaborative practice. (Refer to Volume 3 Appendix 2 for curatorial material.)

Forming: Academy Gallery Director – Malcom Bywaters

The forming stage between Bywaters the Academy Gallery Director and I occurred after the transfer of my PhD to the University of Tasmania (UTAS). Prior to this occurrence I had been working on the curatorial component of another exhibition for my PhD. However, due to a work related transfer, the previous university decided it wished to retain all materials related to that exhibition. I met Bywaters, at the School of Visual and Performing Arts (SVPA) and raised the possibility of curating an exhibition for the gallery which investigated the collaborative process in a contemporary context. I also asked if he would consider supervising me during the exhibition component of this study. Bywaters agreed and was positive about the exhibition premise, feeling it would work well with the overall exhibition program. He asked me to provide him with a rationale (Appendix 2A) and a list of names of artists whom I was considering. At our next meeting Bywaters provided me with a floor plan for Gallery A (Appendix 2B), which was where he hoped the exhibition would be placed. After a number of meetings a shortlist of artists was drawn up, and

letters of invitation were sent on 26 October, 2004 to those artists to seek their participation. Although none of the selected artists declined, the cost of insuring some of their work, both in transit and at the gallery, was quite prohibitive. As a result of these financial constraints some of the artists originally selected were not included in the final exhibition.

During the period from October, 2004 to May, 2005 I received replies from artists whose work complemented the exhibition and was more easily freighted, and whose conditions (if any) could be met by the gallery. I responded to each email and phone contact as they occurred. As the exhibition developed, these contacts, which were predominately through email, became more frequent, and consequently relationships began to form (Appendix 2C).¹

Norming: Academy Gallery Director – Malcom Bywaters

After the formal arrangements had been made for Bywaters to be one of my supervisors, we swiftly moved into the norming stage of organising and setting up procedures for how the exhibition would progress. On 30 August, 2005 Bywaters and I had a pivotal meeting which set a very clear direction for what was required over the following year. Given the calibre of the artists involved, Bywaters was pleased to exhibit their work in Gallery A, and the duration of the exhibition was to be for eight weeks. At the same time as the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition there would be five other exhibitions on show in the gallery complex. We discussed the delivery and installation dates, in addition to the time required to de-install the works. Bywaters said there would be volunteers to help install the works and signage would be handled by the gallery office. We discussed freight expenses and collection details, as well as the look of the invitations. Bywaters' suggestion was to use either a generic image or detailed close ups of each artist's work. The catalogue essay was scheduled to be due a few weeks before the exhibition, and we talked about the importance of achieving a 'look' which would capture the essence of the exhibition.

¹ Appendix 2D contains the significant statements, meanings and categories determined in the email correspondence and was used to provide the phenomenological essence of the exhibition provided at the end of this chapter.

Although I have had some curatorial experience, I had certainly never dealt with an exhibition on this scale before. Bywaters' advice was to take recent Academy Gallery publications whilst on studio visits. He felt it was a good way for the artists to see the type of exhibition programs that had been created, and the calibre of the artists who had exhibited at the Academy Gallery. After I had made the studio visits and collected images we met again to map out the gallery and considered placement of the work. The criteria consisted of how appropriate and relevant the work would be to the exhibition premise of collaboration; the quality of the work; and how the works related to one another in the overall gallery space. It was agreed that loan contracts were to go out when the work was selected, and I was to email label details to the Academy Gallery secretary for proofing and mounting. During these meetings Bywaters was professional, but also warm, supportive and encouraging. He told me there would be times when I was not sure what to do, and urged me to contact him if I had any questions. The studio visits were to be conducted during the week October 17 – 21, 2005.

Forming: The VTW & Geoffrey Ricardo

The possibility of including an artwork from the first two case studies, possibly guild samples from the Parliament House Embroidery (PHE) or, one of the tapestries from the Victorian Tapestry Workshop (VTW) was discussed. Unfortunately the PHE, due to its permanent installation at Parliament House in Canberra, prevented it from being considered. However, there was the possibility that we could include a tapestry from the VTW. The forming stage of the exhibition with the VTW, and by default, with Geoffrey Ricardo was quite short. This was due to the already established relationships I had achieved with the VTW during my residency. The VTW had also already worked with Ricardo on a number of tapestries based on his paintings. However, I realised a formal approach would be required to enquire about the loan of one of the VTW tapestries. Bywaters knew Kate Derum, the Acting VTW Director, and he gave me her home number. He suggested I call her to ascertain if the loan of a tapestry would be a possibility. After a few phone calls without a reply, I emailed Kaye Fauckner, the Assistant Director Administration & Production at the VTW, to ascertain what steps I needed to take. I received a reply from Fauckner the following day, which said that Derum would be in touch shortly about the request in my email. Shortly afterwards, Derum replied that she would be happy to discuss the exhibition

and the possibility of including one of the Workshop's tapestries. This email was particularly important as Derum had given tacit permission for one of the tapestries to be used in the exhibition. On the same day I had received this email I sent a formal letter to Derum outlining the dates, the exhibition premise, the features of Gallery A, and the importance of this exhibition to the university and wider community.

I arranged to visit the VTW, during the week of the studio visits, when Susie Shears the Director had returned from leave. When I arrived I immediately spoke to Fauckner with whom I had established a friendship with during my residency. I spoke to some of the weavers I had interviewed for the VTW case study, and we discussed the projects they were working on. Later I spoke to Shears, and we talked about my residency the year before and also the exhibition premise. I asked Shears about collaboration and how it occurred in the workshop. She emphasised that collaboration was a very important part of the workshop's philosophy, and would therefore be pleased to contribute to the exhibition. Although I had received the assurance from Derum by email before this meeting, I was relieved to hear Shears confirm it. We considered the possibility of juxtaposing an earlier work from the VTW with a contemporary tapestry, but decided this could bias the exhibition towards tapestry. Shears then asked me if I had a particular tapestry in mind; I immediately identified *The Bairnsdale Tapestry* which I had seen being woven during my residency. I was particularly interested, in the fact, that Ricardo had deliberately left parts of it unfinished for the weavers. I felt confident that *The Bairnsdale Tapestry* was appropriate for the exhibition. Shears told me that the building, in which the tapestry would be located at Bairnsdale Regional Hospital (BRH), had not been finished.² Therefore, there was a good possibility that the hospital may be willing to loan it for the exhibition. Shears asked Fauckner to contact the BRH on my behalf. Fauckner had a well established relationship with the project officer which would help to facilitate this request. Later on that morning, Shears made time for me to interview her about the VTW. When I left she asked me to stay in contact regarding the status of the loan for the exhibition.

² The Bairnsdale Regional Health Service had commissioned the tapestry for the hospital.

Norming: The VTW & Geoffrey Ricardo

As noted in the last section, The VTW was very happy to loan the Bairnsdale Tapestry, contingent on receiving permission from the CEO at the Bairnsdale Regional Hospital. In terms of group formation we did not enter a storming stage. There was no resistance to my proposal, and nobody actively tried to sabotage the process. The process moved swiftly to the norming stage of getting organised and working together. As stated previously, Fauckner had agreed to contact the Project Officer from the BRH on my behalf, as she had corresponded with her during the weaving of the tapestry. Once again, the importance of a prior relationship was emphasised during this process. Fauckner sent the following email shortly after my VTW visit: 'I hope your visit achieved what you wanted and although it hasn't been confirmed yet, it looks very promising that the Bairnsdale Hospital tapestry will be available for your exhibition. Stand by for confirmation.'³

On 24 October, 2005, I wrote to Fauckner to ask for Ricardo's contact details. Bywaters and I had both felt that to include the painting which formed the basis of the design for the tapestry, would enhance the exhibition. This would allow the viewer to visually compare the painting with the tapestry, enabling them to see the decisions the weavers had made in their interpretation. Bywaters also knew Ricardo, and this prior relationship also helped in establishing contact with him.

Performing: Academy Gallery Director – Malcom Bywaters

During the process of organising the exhibition, Bywaters and I did not go through a storming stage. There were times when I needed advice and sought it, and Bywaters always gave it willingly. However, we moved rapidly from the formal stage of his appointment as one of my supervisors, to planning the exhibition. Our roles were already clearly established and we were both working towards the same goal. The only incident that caused a small amount of tension was a difference in opinion regarding the invitation image.⁴ However, I think this small incident did not constitute being called a storming stage. The performing stage for pulling the exhibition together

³ Email from Kaye Fauckner, Assistant Director Administration & Production, 24/10/05, 9.42am.

⁴ I was convinced that the image which was finally chosen perfectly encapsulated the human dynamic of the collaborative process, whereas Bywaters felt it was too much of a cliché. We reached a compromise by using photoshop to change the appearance of the hands from the original image (Appendix 2F).

was the largest, as we reached decisions, worked closely and supportively, and were resourceful and creative.

Bywaters and I had a number of meetings from March to September 2005. We sent the nominated artists the official exhibition invitation letter (Appendix 2E) and a number of catalogues from the Academy Gallery. Considerable time was taken to determine which works were to be chosen for the exhibition, and if it was financially viable to exhibit them, given insurance and other conditions imposed by particular artists. One group requested that their work needed to be insured for replacement value if they were damaged even slightly. Bywaters explained that given the value of this particular work, this would be quite impossible for the gallery to undertake. He drafted an email for me, which tactfully informed these artists that the Academy Gallery did not have the funding of larger galleries, where these types of requests could be met.

During the performing stage of the exhibition, I had quite a heavy teaching load. Bywaters understood this situation and we scheduled meetings to fit around my teaching commitments. Conversely, I was also considerate of his workload and there were a few times when he missed meetings due to confusion over time, or because a last minute emergency had occurred. I appreciated his expertise and advice with some of the artists, particularly those with international reputations. It was very helpful to have Bywaters' expertise during these times, and I always checked with him before committing the gallery to any unforeseen expense. After working with Bywaters for a while I began to understand the sensibility required to deal with the artists and also maintain the integrity of the curator, director and the gallery program. As time progressed I was able to prepare and plan for unforeseen events and developed a way of responding that reassured the artist without providing an obligation I was not authorised to make. I felt during this performing stage that our relationship had changed, from student/supervisor to co-collaborators, as we worked through the complexities of organising the exhibition.⁵

⁵ This was evident in our meetings, during which we progressed from Bywaters explaining curatorial protocol, to working with me to decide on how to respond to sensitive matters relating to the artists in the exhibition.

On 15 November, 2005, Bywaters sent an email⁶ asking for the names of the artists in the exhibition as he needed to provide details for the Arts Tasmania 2005 – 06 Budget/Exhibition Program Report. Shortly after the studio visits in October 2005, I had a long meeting with Bywaters to discuss the final selection of artists. On 2 December, 2005 Bywaters sent an email out to all the curators involved in the 2006 Academy Gallery program asking for an image for the calendar and also the artist's name, artwork title, year, size and medium, plus the photographer's acknowledgement. I emailed Bywaters to discuss what type of image I should include on the calendar, given the number of people involved. He suggested a compilation of images from each of the artists, which necessitated contacting all of the participants to see if they could provide an image, which represented them, but did not necessarily have to be in the exhibition. I received images from all of the artists which I sent on to Bywaters. His reply was a bit disconcerting, but welcomed after the difficulties I had experienced trying to source a relevant image for the invitation:

I have reviewed the *Partnership or Perish* exhibition artwork images. With the Academy Gallery calendar I think we really need a generic image such as the two hands coming together that you previously e-mailed. In fact why don't we, and with and the clarity of the holiday speaking here, use that image. There will not be enough practical room on the calendar to give justice to a check board of images. I suggest the one strong image, such as the hands coming together is the best practice solution.⁷

I think after considering a number of options, Bywaters also realised just how difficult it was to find a generic image which encapsulated the idea of collaboration.



Figure 5: Image for *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition calendar and invitation

⁶ All emails referred to in this chapter are compiled in Appendix 2C under each participant's name.

⁷ Email from Academy Gallery Director Malcom Bywaters, 6/1/06, 11.43am

The working out of the calendar image (Appendixes 2F & 2G) and trying to collect images from the artists occurred during December 2005 and January 2006. Obtaining images from the artists, was complicated because in some cases the work was not yet completed, or in Vella's case had to be reconfigured for the space. I decided to request an image from the VTW first, as I felt confident that they would have one of the completed tapestry. Unfortunately, the only image the VTW had of the tapestry was with the weavers, Sue Batten and John Dicks, standing in front of it.⁸ This was the first time Bywaters had seen the tapestry, and he was very impressed and supported my enthusiasm for it to be included in the exhibition. However, it did appear that we would not be able to obtain a good image of the tapestry, particularly given its size, until it arrived at the gallery, when we could photograph it ourselves.

Bywaters informed me that we would need to finalise the invitations and other mail outs at least two months before the exhibition opening. We decided to again use the symbol of the hands on the invitation (Appendix 2H) to provide a link to the calendar and other publicity material. Bywaters asked me to provide all of the images for the work and biographical information for the artists, in addition to writing the catalogue essay. As the curator it was an interesting process to see how important it was to have knowledge of all the artists and their personalities, in addition to their motivation for being in the exhibition. I felt this knowledge was invaluable to Bywaters as we made decisions regarding placement, order, selection of images and ways of presenting shared authorship on the gallery didactics and in the catalogue. As part of this complex process, Bywaters had also fulfilled his tasks by organising the gallery volunteers to be available for the installation week. The volunteers had been well trained by Bywaters and were committed, enthusiastic and had an excellent understanding of gallery protocol (Appendix 2I). The installation process went very smoothly because all of the participants clearly understood their goals and they were also skilled in the task they had undertaken. Susie Shears, the VTW Director, kindly agreed to speak at both the gallery floor talk in the afternoon and also at the opening that night.⁹ The importance of obtaining publicity, both for the gallery and the artists, was also considered. We were fortunate to have two coloured photographs of *The*

⁸ The VTW take photographs of the weavers standing with the tapestry they have completed, but these photographs are not for publication.

⁹ Appendix 2K contains transcripts of Susie Shears' floor talk and opening night speech.

Bairnsdale Tapestry included in the local newspaper with an article which referred to all of the artists and their work (Appendix 2L). The art education kits were developed by my secondary art education students under my supervision (Appendix 2M). We worked together to produce activities which were appropriate for students from K-12. This was an important opportunity for my students to create and provide appropriate and educationally sound activities and information for classroom teachers to use in conjunction with the exhibition. The catalogue which also accompanied the art education kit is included in Appendix 2N.

Performing: VTW and Geoffrey Ricardo

On 9 December, 2005 Fauckner from the VTW emailed to say that the Project Officer had given permission for *The Bairnsdale Tapestry* to be exhibited at the Academy Gallery for the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition. One of my concerns however, was that the VTW did not normally show an artwork and its related tapestry together. On some occasions artists have directed the VTW to burn their artwork, so that the tapestry exists without reference to anything else.¹⁰ After contacting Fauckner about this concern, I received the following email: ‘As the subject of the exhibition is about collaboration between artists we are very happy for you to show the tapestry and painting together.’¹¹ After receiving this permission, I contacted Ricardo to see if he would be able to loan his painting for the exhibition. I received the following email: ‘Hi Margaret, thanks for the letter regarding the tapestry show. I have the painting that was interpreted into the tapestry and I would be very happy for you to include it in the exhibition.’¹² After receiving Ricardo’s email I contacted Bywaters, who then began arrangements for insurance and freight of the work.

On 15 May, 2006, I received an email from Bywaters who informed me that IAS–DAS¹³ carriers were coming to Tasmania, and that he had hoped that we could accelerate the delivery of the tapestry to that date. The urgency was attributed to the fact that IAS–DAS rarely made special trips to Tasmania, and they also had a well-established reputation as secure and reliable art carriers. Bywaters realised it would be

¹⁰ The previous director Sue Walker refers to one instance of this in her talk “Tapestry and its place in contemporary arts practice” held at the University of Tasmania on the 7/6/91, when she refers to burning a cartoon by Richard Larter who stated that the tapestry was to be the final statement.

¹¹ Email from Kaye Fauckner, Assistant Director Administration & Production, VTW, 1/2/06, 3.54pm.

¹² Email from Geoffrey Ricardo, Artist, to Margaret Baguley 9/2/2006, 1.47am.

¹³ International Art Services (IAS)/Das Art Services (DAS)

a good opportunity to receive the tapestry securely and much earlier than planned. My concern was that the loan form was in transit to the CEO at Bairnsdale Regional Hospital. Bywaters suggested telephoning the CEO to see if the loan form could be faxed back to us. In the meantime Ricardo had offered to deliver his painting to the VTW, so that the painting and tapestry could travel together.

The CEO at the hospital gave his approval for the loan forms and passed them on to the Fundraising and Special Projects Manager, who asked if somebody could talk her through them. Fortunately, Bywaters was able to do this, and rang back later in the day to say that he had left a long message on her answering machine and was waiting to hear back from her. Ricardo was unable to deliver the painting to the VTW, as his car had broken down, so IAS-DAS arranged to pick it up from his house. Bywaters sent a later email to confirm that everything was in place, and to further describe why it was so important to take advantage of this opportunity:

I am arranging the artwork to be transported by IAS-DAS. They are one of the best art transport companies operating in the country. IAS-DAS is used by the National Gallery of Australia etc. IAS-DAS rarely come to Tasmania and when they do there is a scramble by all the TAS galleries/museums to get them to transport artwork. I am hoping that we can use IAS-DAS to return transport the tapestry in September.¹⁴

Suffice to say that the tapestry and painting arrived safely, and in good time to allow them to acclimatise in the gallery environment before they were put on exhibition.

Forming: S!X - Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd

My first encounter with Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd's work was when I saw their 'Percy Grainger' jacket, at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra. I was also aware they had previously won the textiles section of the Hobart Art Prize.¹⁵ Sprynskyj and Boyd had been sent an initial letter of invitation with a number of

¹⁴ Email from Academy Gallery Director, Malcom Bywaters, 17/5/06, 4.48pm.

¹⁵ In 2001 from 14 finalists the award went to Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd, working under the label SIX, who exhibited work titled *Re-cut*. The pieces consisted of a recycled man's shirt inserted with laser-cut polyester, a hand-painted organza square tailored dress and a handbag made from a man's jacket.

gallery catalogues, but had not replied. Eventually, I was able to make phone contact with Sprynskyj on 26 April, 2005, who told me she had not seen the letter, but was very interested in participating in the exhibition. She thanked me for the gallery's interest in wanting to exhibit their work. On 4 May, I phoned again, and Boyd told me that both he and Denise were more than happy to be involved in the exhibition and wanted to make new work for it. At this time I spoke to Boyd about collaboration in some depth, particularly about the notion of people working together and simply calling it collaboration. From my notes, I recalled we had a lively discussion about what constituted collaboration.

On 7 July, I left a phone message for Sprynskyj and Boyd and left contact details for Malcom and I. In the interim, both Sprynskyj and Boyd had been invited as *S/X* to show their work in Tokyo, so we were not able to discuss their involvement again until August. I rang again on 22 August, and Sprynskyj rang back shortly afterwards to say that her and Boyd had discussed creating new work, and would Malcom and I be able to write a support letter for a grant application. I replied that we could and would send the letter to them the following day, after the next exhibition meeting. At this point, I also obtained Sprynskyj's email details so that we could stay in touch more regularly. I then enquired as to a suitable date to make a studio visit and Sprynskyj suggested 20 – 21 October, would work best, but she could not lock in a time until a little closer to the date. The studio visit was confirmed by email. An extract from my field notes records my observations during this time:

The Studio Visit (First Impressions): 21 October, 2005

What a fantastic duo they are! Denise and Peter's studio is very close to RMIT and unfortunately they were evicted from their other 'fabulous' studio quite recently. They are making do however and the studio was piled with the essentials necessary for fashion designers. They were sharing the building with another company, but they were quite separate, although the stairwell connected everyone together. Gorgeous and inspiring creations hung from various racks. There were aspects of different surface effects printed on acetate and hung on the wall. Obviously a lot of work undergoes a percolation stage before they commit fully to it.

They are both very likeable and accommodating. However, they had a lot on when I visited, and were quite stressed. I was aware of this and tried to finish the interview as quickly as possible, but they wanted to keep talking! Denise and Peter are very definite in their views and come up with thoughts about collaboration that are similar to [deleted]. The fact that they push each other – they end up supporting each other. Denise gave a wonderful recent example at the Powerhouse where she didn't want to talk, she felt ill, but Peter pushed her to do it.

We sat together and chatted for ages. Denise and Peter often finished each other's sentences and have a great deal of respect for each other's opinions. They told me they spent a lot of time together, even taking holidays together. They have a strong work ethic and are often in the studio to all hours. I stayed much longer than scheduled, but I believe they postponed their next appointment because they are so passionate about their work, and they really wanted to talk about it.

They then encouraged me to take photos and they walked me over to RMIT to show me where they worked. The student work is obviously inspired from their influence. They have a large working space for the students and obviously enjoy training the next generation of fashion designers.¹⁶

This October visit was very important in establishing a more personal contact with Sprynskyj and Boyd, and they were very welcoming and enthusiastic about the exhibition. We spent some degree of the conversation discussing the nature of how to transform creative output into research 'points' in the university context. They were also very aware of the importance of gaining research points through exhibitions and articles. Therefore they were keen, particularly from this academic viewpoint to be involved in the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition. During the interview it became clear that they saw themselves first and foremost as fashion designers. They also

¹⁶ Extract from field notes by Margaret Baguley, 22/10/05.

cherished the collaborative relationship they had maintained for the last ten years.

When I asked Boyd how they started creating a work he replied:

You always know what you're doing, you're working on winter, or you're working on summer, but we don't ... there's never like a start, a start time. Like we never sort of say "Right, now we're working on Summer, let's go, let's start talking about ideas." We would have been talking about it months, months ago.¹⁷

It was interesting to see the number of similarities they drew between themselves and the way that artists work:

DS: We have a handwriting that we always go back to, like certain things that we're interested in, so they ... when you look at our work you can see it, can't you really [directed to Peter]. Because we're interested in tailoring ...

MB: Oh yes.

DS: We're not tailors, we're not tailors ... PB: There's always a tailoring reference point, somewhere. [Together]

DS: In the traditional sense. So you'll see it in any body of work, so we just always come with that perspective, which is like many artists really ... I mean if you look at somebody like Mark Rothko, you know, repeatedly painting the square.

MB: That's right. Mondrian.

DS: Exactly. So that's probably how we see our work. It'll never change ... dramatically, because ... we don't follow trends.¹⁸

This preliminary sharing of information allowed us to formalise our relationship and helped me to clarify Sprynskyj and Boyd's contribution to the exhibition.

¹⁷ Interview with Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd, *S/X*, 21 October, 2005.

¹⁸ Interview with Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd, *S/X*, 21 October, 2005.

Norming: S!X - Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd

The studio visit with Sprynskyj and Boyd went very well and I felt we had established a good basis to work together on the exhibition. We kept in touch with phone calls during this time. Although I knew they were creating new work for the exhibition, I had to ask for an image which could encapsulate their work for the exhibition calendar. Sprynskyj sent through some images on 15 December, 2005. They were the printed detail of a jacket and the image of a model wearing one of their garments. She asked if it was possible to use the printed detail as a background for the catwalk image. I was able to gain the assistance of one of the information technology staff, who followed Sprynskyj's directions for the image. Although we did not eventually use this image for the calendar, it gave me a good idea of the type of work Sprynskyj and Boyd wished to be represented by. When reading through the email correspondence again I am surprised at how dispassionate the conversation appeared to be when contrasted with what Sprynskyj was really like. The other interesting aspect was that Boyd never emailed, it was always Sprynskyj. He did not appear to have an email address and there was none listed in the RMIT directory.

Performing: S!X - Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd

Email contact between Sprynskyj and Boyd was not re-established until 20 April, 2006, when I asked if they would be willing to be involved in the art education kits for the exhibition. They confirmed their participation through email a few days later. The email also gave some indication of the work they would be sending for the exhibition: 'We will be deciding this week the outfit for the exhibition as well as the display. We are not keen to have a catwalk parade or any of our work on the body, but we could show a video or a powerpoint of images on the body.'¹⁹ A further email from Sprynskyj on 18 May, 2006, specified five elements to their exhibition:

We have decided to show an outfit from the collection called "This is not a collection" this was shown at MAFW.²⁰ This collection is made up of pieces that have been in S!X for 10 years, the garments are not worn as separates but are joined together.

1. Jacket with skirt inserted taken from a recycled prototype.

¹⁹ Email from Denise Sprynskyj to Margaret Baguley, 23/4/06, 5.34 pm.

²⁰ Melbourne Fashion Week

2. Upside down recycled trouser skirt
3. Pattern pieces to be laid flat to show the reconstruction
4. Posters showing catwalk images and artwork related to shibori and dyeing
5. A powerpoint ²¹

I emailed Sprynskyj back on the same day to see if we could obtain any images of the work, to assist the students writing up the art education kit. She replied on 1 June, 2006, with apologies that she had to check the photographer's acknowledgements first. In this email Sprynskyj provided further details regarding the garment and how it had been constructed:

The outfit is actually a nylon jacket with a tailored suit interested into the front. The jacket is not buttoned up at the front, but is put on over the head similar to a jumper. The tailored skirt is actually from a men's trouser and jacket. The pants have been cut open in the inside leg and then sewn to form a front panel for the skirt, the tailored jacket has been cut and stitched into a semi circle and attached to create the back of the skirt. All tailoring references have been kept, waist tapes, jet pockets and pocket linings.²²

Although I had seen how the process was consolidated in the finished garments, it was fascinating to read how it occurred across both men's and women's fashions to form a hybrid garment with decorations made from concealed structural devices such as seams and zip fastenings.

We organised for the work to be picked up from S/X on 22 June, 2006. I phoned Sprynskyj on 20 June and left a message to see if she had heard from the couriers. She replied on the same day: 'I haven't heard anything yet, we will be sending the powerpoint, garment and a poster, I have taken out the pattern pieces as they looked too cluttered.'²³ Sprynskyj was not to know, that we had already finalised the

²¹ Email from Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd, 18/5/05, 12.15pm.

²² Email from Denise Sprynskyj to Margaret Baguley, 1/6/06, 10.17am.

²³ Email from Denise Sprynskyj to Margaret Baguley, 20/6/06, 2.45pm.

catalogue essay and education kit based on their earlier information of what would be in the exhibition. This meant a re-editing before final printing. Bywaters told me that he had worked with fashion people before and found them to be always rushing to deadlines, as they traditionally have to do when creating collections for a show.

When the work arrived Bywaters informed me that the large poster had been crushed at one end of the tube, and asked me to let Sprynskyj and Boyd know as soon as possible. The poster appeared to have expanded in the tube, and again Bywaters told me that Sprynskyj and Boyd would be used to sending clothing through couriers, which is much more robust than paper. Harvey Norman had generously loaned the gallery two large plasma screens to display the work of *S!X* and Turpin and Crawford. The computer technician at the School of Visual and Performing Arts was able to convert Denise and Peter's powerpoint onto a DVD for showing on the plasma screen. The garment on display was also featured on the powerpoint, so there was a good link between the passive display of the garment and its presentation as a performance piece. The following week Sprynskyj and Boyd headed to Europe for the fashion shows and, unfortunately, could not attend the opening. I received a phone message from Denise on 25 July, both asking how the opening went and responding to a message Bywaters left regarding an ABC radio interview. I sent images of the work installed and feedback about the exhibition.

When looking at the email correspondence between us, it was apparent that it was less than most of the other artists. Sprynskyj preferred to talk on the phone and I attributed this to her busy schedule, and also because she preferred this more human interaction. At times it did make things difficult, and there were time delays while we tried to catch up with each other. Ultimately however, during the performing stage the work arrived on time and Sprynskyj and Boyd were both very pleased with its final presentation both in the exhibition and the catalogue and education kit.

Forming: Turpin Crawford Studio - Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford

Jennifer Turpin and I had a fairly extensive phone and email correspondence before we met in person in October 2005. The gallery had sent an initial letter of invitation for the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition towards the end of 2004, which the Turpin and Crawford studio did not receive. I then rang on 5 April, 2005, and left a message

on the answering machine. I received a phone message from Turpin on 21 April, 2005, asking me to please call her. I rang back that afternoon and had a wonderful conversation about the complexities of collaboration, similar to the one I had with Peter Boyd from *S/X*. Turpin said she would be willing to participate as the Turpin Crawford studio in the exhibition. Her friendly nature and welcoming manner on the phone and through email correspondence helped set the tone for an engaging and supportive interaction during the lead up to the exhibition. Bywaters had told me in one of our exhibition meetings that I would find that the more prominent the artist was, the more down to earth they would be, which seemed to be true in Turpin's case.

During one of our conversations Turpin told me she would be travelling to Tasmania for a conference on public art. I contacted Dr Deborah Malor, the lecturer in art theory at the School of Visual and Performing Arts (SVPA), to see if it was possible for Turpin to give a presentation at the Arts Forum, a weekly presentation hosted by the SVPA. Unfortunately, it would be mid-semester break when Turpin was in Tasmania, so consequently, there would be no Arts Forum. Correspondence about the Arts Forum and general matters with the exhibition was conducted from April – July, 2005. I also told Turpin that I had been using images of *The Memory Line*, an environmental work created by her and Crawford in my primary art education classes. Turpin always sought to convey a personal message: 'Thanks for the update. Hope you are well too. It's cold here in Sydney ... my fingers are blue as I type ... Though I'm sure it's many degrees colder in Tas.'²⁴ On 22 August, 2005, I sent an email which stated the dates of the exhibition and when I hoped to meet Turpin and Crawford for a studio visit. It was revealed whilst trying to find a convenient date to visit, that Turpin and I were both going overseas around the same time. This coincidence sparked another flurry of emails, and provided more common ground for future conversations. I emailed on the 5 September, 2005, to explain that I needed to finalise a date for the studio visit. Turpin responded the next day to say that she had checked with Crawford, and October 17 would be a suitable date for both of them to see me. It was interesting to note Turpin took the responsibility for email correspondence during this time.

²⁴ Email from Jennifer Turpin to Margaret Baguley, 18/7/05, 10.26am.

We were not able to correspond again until 10 October, 2005, when I emailed Turpin upon my return from overseas to re-confirm the studio date. I realised that she had just returned as well: ‘Yes I’m back. The trip was fantastic ... glad yours was too. It’s hard to adjust to being home ... jet lag etc ... Monday is fine. I will speak to Michaelie today. I suggest 10.30am but I will check with Michaelie and get back to you today.’²⁵ Throughout our correspondence Turpin always responded promptly, and was cognate of the restrictions I was operating under regarding University policies and procedures. The following extract from my field notes outlines my first impressions of Turpin and Crawford at their studio in Sydney:

The Studio Visit (First Impressions): 17 October, 2005

I decided to walk to the studio from the hotel in Wentworth Avenue. It took about twenty-five minutes and was very pleasant, although it was raining slightly. I arrived at the studio in Chippendale, just before 10am. The lights were already on in the studio, but I was too early, so I decided to investigate the area. The studio itself is tucked into a quiet side street, and is quite unassuming. It is tall and contains a number of levels. The sign at the front asks visitors to go the side door and ring the bell. At about 10.25am I went up to the doorbell, as I went to ring it I noticed Janet Lawrence’s name was on the adjacent studio.

After meeting Jenny, we went upstairs to the second level and Jenny introduced me to Michaelie, who was also very friendly and extremely welcoming. The studio was light filled with large glass windows and a number of constructions suspended or floating from the ceiling. Jenny explained that she was working on a project for a Sydney school and that was what the floating constructions were for. The studio was situated on a long rectangle with a table near the door and along one side of the room there were numerous files and books pertaining to all of their different projects. Down the far side of the room was a computer. The other side contained working spaces and a drawer file cabinet. There was a small

²⁵ Email from Jennifer Turpin, Turpin Crawford Studio, 12/10/05, 10.58am.

well stocked kitchen behind a wall near the table as well as a toilet, set off to the side of the kitchen.

Jennifer and Michaelie were very keen to show me videos and DVDs of their work, which were interesting and informative. They were very passionate about the integrity of their work and were quite forthcoming about the processes they take. We also had a very interesting discussion about the controversy surrounding the 'Fan Project.'²⁶ There were at least thirteen thick folders pertaining to this project, and I do not think people understand the extraordinary amount of work artists go to when undertaking these types of projects.²⁷

During our conversation, I found that they thought similarly about a range of issues. Jennifer and Michaelie discussed how they endeavoured to slow down the pace of their work so that it echoed the rhythms of the body. When I questioned them further about this they revealed that they imbue feminine qualities in their work. We spoke for over three hours, and they committed themselves to the exhibition. I think their work will certainly be an insight into how the collaborative process can work on a monumental scale.²⁸

During the studio visit I found both Turpin and Crawford to be very warm, thoughtful and well grounded people, who were generous with their time and open about sharing in a dialogue regarding their collaborative process. They both have a wonderful sense of humour; Turpin's is a little more understated, as can be see in this extract from their interview:

²⁶ Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford had their design which celebrated 100 years of women voting accepted for inclusion on the prominent site behind Old Parliament House, on the land axis between Parliament House and the Australian War Memorial. Even though they had won the design competition with their six-storey red *Fan*, they were later told that it would not be possible to go ahead with the project. For more information see www.smh.com.au/articles/2003/09/16/1063625035925.html?from=storyrhs

²⁷ For example, Turpin's father built a wind tunnel in the studio to see how they could operate the fan using various intensities of wind strength. There were also numerous concept and scale model drawings.

²⁸ Extract from field notes by Margaret Baguley, 17/10/05.

JT: And when we're in the middle of making works, I always find - I don't know if you do – [aside to Michaelie] I think you do too, I often have these dreamlike, if I'm half awake or half asleep or something, waking up and often sort of embodying the sculpture, like I remember when we were making the swing, my body became this piece of stainless steel, burnished stainless steel [laughs] and what ...

MC: I never do that.

[Laughter]

MC: I never become stainless steel.

[Laughter] ²⁹

When I was at the studio I also met Turpin's father who advises her on some aspects of her work, as he used to be an engineer. I thought it was important that an artist of Turpin's calibre valued her father's input so much that he was encouraged to work in her studio, and obviously was available as a sounding board as she created her work. The serenity of her character obviously draws from the strength of her family and relationships with the people around her. Crawford also had a wonderful rapport with Turpin's father, but with young children at home she has had to decrease her involvement in the studio. Turpin confided that their partnership had almost finished in terms of joint projects. However, it was obvious that both Turpin and Crawford had enjoyed a collaborative partnership that encapsulated their wonderful sense of humour and valued the contribution of one another:

MB: So if you could define the characteristics of your collaboration?

[Laughter]

MC: It would be joyous.

JT: Oh, that's a lovely word.

MC: But it definitely wouldn't exist without the joy.

JT: No, or the fun.

MC: Or the laying on the floor and putting your feet in the air.

JT: And laughter. ³⁰

²⁹ Interview with Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford, Turpin Crawford Studio, 17/10/05.

³⁰ Interview with Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford, Turpin Crawford Studio, 17/10/05.

This lack of preciousness was evident in all of our correspondence. During the studio visit Turpin and Crawford gave me a display book with a comprehensive overview of their work, including coloured images and biographies. On 8 November, 2005, I sent an email to Turpin and Crawford, after an exhibition meeting with Bywaters, to suggest work that could be included in the exhibition:

I have just left you both a phone message to say that I met with Malcom Bywaters the gallery director this morning and he was simply ‘blown away’ by the quality of your work. I showed him the wonderful display book you gave me and virtually had to wrestle it away from him at the end of the meeting! We talked about the possibilities of exhibiting your work and his idea is to place the plasma screen in the centre of the long gallery wall with your DVD running and then to surround it with the concept drawings relevant to the work on the screen. (I’m sorry I waxed lyrical about the elegance of the drawings.) Because the exhibition is about the collaborative process, placing the concept drawings in this way would have wonderful visual impact for the viewer who would then see how the work has been created from the drawing board to the screen. I think it would work really well, as I know you were concerned with text on the screen, but this way I think would be less intrusive and more flowing to the space and the viewer. I think having one or two would be too ‘documentary’ but creating a wall of the drawings would be almost like another work in its own way. I’m not sure how you feel about this but let me know if it’s a possibility.³¹

I was nervous about making such a suggestion for the presentation of the work, as I knew that Turpin and Crawford would have preferred the work to stand on its own without the support material. However, Turpin’s reply was very encouraging and allayed all my concerns:

Thank you for your phone message and email. It is great to hear that Malcom Bywaters responded well to the work. And thank you for the

³¹ Email to Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford from Margaret Baguley, 8/11/05, 5.10pm.

transcript which I will look at in the next few days. Michaelie has her copy and we will get back to you about that. She and I also need to talk about the drawings idea. So we will get back to you on both counts. It was terrific to meet finally and we both really enjoyed your enthusiastic responses to the works and very much appreciate your interest in *organising such an interesting exhibition*³² [Emphasis in original].

After receiving this email, I felt that our relationship had reached the end point of the forming stage where we all felt comfortable with one another enough to propose ideas, and discuss the most effective presentation of the work for the exhibition.

Norming: Turpin Crawford Studio - Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford

I sent Turpin and Crawford an email on 5 December, 2005, to ask for an image for the Academy Gallery calendar. Once again, Turpin was very prompt in her response and in this email also said that she and Crawford would be willing to contribute their scale drawings to the exhibition. Throughout January and February 2006, we exchanged emails regarding the types of drawings, how they would be mounted, the effect of the plasma screen and installation and de-installation dates. I emphasised that this was a process that could change and develop as we worked together towards the exhibition:

We just wanted to start the conversation about presentation as early as possible to ensure that we are all satisfied with how everything is going to work together. So, please don't feel any of this is hard and fast, I know ideas can ebb and flow so feel free to keep the dialogue going as we progress to the opening! How exciting – I can't wait to see it all together!³³

Turpin included me in the decision making as much as possible, and we brainstormed a number of possibilities for how the final selection of work would look. Contact between myself and Turpin lessened over March and April, due to both our work commitments. I sent another email on 20 April, regarding the Turpin Crawford Studio's participation in the education kit, to which Turpin responded positively. At

³² Email from Jennifer Turpin, Turpin Crawford Studio from Margaret Baguley, 9/11/05, 12.46 pm.

³³ Email from Margaret Baguley to Jennifer Turpin, 30/1/06, 11.32am.

this stage the relationship was well established and we enthusiastically moved towards the performing stage of finalising the work for the exhibition.

Performing: Turpin Crawford Studio - Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford

During the performing stage with each of the artist groups I had a number of exhibition meetings with Bywaters to clarify the types of questions I needed to ask in relation to the work to be exhibited. On 8 June, 2006, I sent an email to Turpin to enquire about the progress of the DVD of their work, in addition to the scale drawings. Turpin and Crawford had decided to create a DVD of their site-specific work to give the viewer some indication of the scale of their work. I was quite impressed when Turpin replied that it was taking a bit longer than they had expected because they had hired a professional film crew: 'The film shoot was a big event which we did a few weeks ago taking a week. Had to work around bad weather ... but we managed to get some fantastic footage particularly of *Tied to Tide*. We hired a crane and a very professional camera crew.'³⁴

There were numerous emails during June pertaining to the exhibition, and specifically about whether the DVD was to be looped, the copyright on particular images, and whether the drawings were to be mounted on core board or not. Once again Turpin and Crawford's professionalism came to the fore when Turpin emailed and said: 'We are looking at either 16 or 18 x A1 sized boards. We've done a layout to see how they fit on the wall and they look good. Michelie and I will do the final edit next week.' (Appendix 2J)³⁵

On 27 June, 2006, I sent an email to Turpin to see how the drawings were going, and to organise air transport. At this time they were still working on the sound editing for the DVD, and were also hoping to reprint two of the boards which were a little green. I knew that this was important to them and checked with Bywaters to see if we could possibly delay the pick up of their work, so that they could finish what they needed to do and be happy with the outcome. The editing of the DVD was taking longer than expected, so Turpin sent an older DVD which we received early in the installation

³⁴ Email from Jennifer Turpin, to Margaret Baguley, 8/6/06, 6.03 pm.

³⁵ Email from Jennifer Turpin to Margaret Baguley, 16/6/06, 11.16am.

week and were able to have playing during installation. Turpin followed up the delivery of the crate with a comprehensive email listing the contents of the crate. There was one slight moment of panic when Turpin's assistant Claire sent an email on 12 July at 5.22pm – the day before the opening – to say that the courier could not deliver to a locked bag address and could we please send the physical address. Unfortunately, the opening date had been moved forward by one day and in the confusion I had neglected to tell Turpin. Luckily the DVD arrived the morning of the opening, and was playing when Susie Shears gave her gallery floor talk at 1pm that day. The new DVD received many positive comments on the opening night. A number of people found it particularly soothing and quite mesmerising and asked if it were possible to purchase it. Bywaters suggested placing a seat in front of the DVD which worked very well. The seat encouraged viewers to sit and watch the interaction of Turpin and Crawford's site specific art works, with the natural elements of wind and water. The curatorial relationship between Turpin and Crawford had proceeded smoothly and was rewarding for us all.

Forming: John Vella and Tasmanian students

John Vella who lives and works in Hobart, was the only local artist included in the exhibition. I had previously seen some of Vella's work featured in *UniTAS*, one of the University of Tasmania's magazines. Later, I realised that I had also exhibited with him at the group invitational exhibition *Queue Here* at the Canberra Contemporary Art Space in 2002. The initial letter of invitation for the exhibition was sent out on 26 October, 2004. Vella left a phone message for me shortly afterwards to indicate that he would like to be involved in the exhibition, but wished to know which other artists were being considered. I presumed Vella was concerned that the calibre of the artists in the exhibition needed to, at least, be comparable to his artistic standing. Since 1993 Vella has had eleven solo exhibitions and more than forty group exhibitions, and his work is represented in several private collections around Australia. As well, Vella contacted Bywaters regarding the standard of the artists we were expecting to commit to the show. At this time Vella had been made Acting Head of Sculpture for UTAS in Hobart. I felt we had a good connection, given that we were both aware of the unique pressures that exist on lecturers in a university context.

Initial contact with Vella was made in October/November, 2004. Vella knew Bywaters quite well and touched base periodically with him about the exhibition. I re-established email contact on 17 July, 2005, to provide Vella with an update on how things were progressing with the exhibition. Vella always responded promptly to these types of emails and was enthusiastic. On 22 August, 2005, I emailed Vella regarding a studio visit date. He emailed back with a few options, but with both of our workloads it was very difficult to settle on a particular day. I left for overseas in September, 2005, and when I returned I found an email invitation to his exhibition ‘Silicone Valley,’ which opened on 23 September. I returned his email, apologising for missing the opening and hoping to finalise a date and time for a studio visit. I felt being included on Vella’s email list for his exhibitions was an important step in our relationship. I also felt it was a way for him to show me the type of work he was doing, and to emphasise his transition beyond ‘emerging artist’ status. We were finally able to confirm a studio visit date for December 12, 2005. John suggested we meet at the ‘Jampacked’ café near the School of Arts where he worked. My first impressions of Vella, and his work, are recorded below as an extract from my field notes shortly after our meeting:

The (Studio) Visit (First Impressions): 12 December, 2005

I left Launceston at 7.30am for the trip to Hobart to ensure that I would have enough time to locate the School of Art and the café. I managed to find a park right outside the café and was quite early, so I went for a walk to the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) and found some wonderful resources in the bookshop, which I went back to purchase after the interview.

When I went back to the café there were a couple sitting outside and I thought the man might be John. I went and asked him and he said ‘No’, but he knew him. I then went inside the café, which had a large selection of gourmet products and browsed along the shelves. I was there for about 10 minutes when I saw a man talking to the other man outside. The other man must have mentioned I had asked him about him because he kept looking up into the café and then walked in.

I introduced myself and he seemed very direct and a little guarded. I offered to buy him a drink and he said he would like a bottle of juice and I ordered tea. We both waited until they were ready and then found a seat outside, which was very pleasant. John looked very tired and one of the first questions he asked concerned who was in the exhibition. I felt that it would be expedient to tell him, so I mentioned Jennifer and Michaelie who he had heard of. He was very impressed they were to be included. I then discussed the Victorian Tapestry Workshop and how they worked with a number of prominent artists. I could see him visibly relax and become very interested in the exhibition. I also talked about Peter and Denise and mentioned how they had won the Hobart Art Prize a few years ago. At this point the conversation began to flow much more easily and we discussed what the word collaboration meant. John admitted that some of his projects were more collaborative than others, and was concerned that his work might not fit into the premise of the exhibition. I asked him to describe a number of works and asked about the interaction of the participants. The *PlaceMats* project sounded very promising, and John offered to show me some images of his work which were on the computer at the Art School. As we were leaving he showed me one of his works hanging in the bar next to the café. It was of his Calvin Klein series, and I particularly appreciated the patterning in it. John was most concerned that there was a mark on the Perspex, and we talked about how expensive it was to mount work.

We only had to walk thirty meters or so along the front of the café to access the School of Art building. As we neared the door one of John's students stopped to talk to him about her work. He is obviously very accessible to the students and had to, eventually, tell her that we were in a meeting. The same thing happened inside, and it was with some relief that we finally arrived at his office. It was a small office and felt cluttered, but he knew where everything was. I saw a photograph of his daughter and we chatted about her, and also about the fact that his family is from Malta, a country I had recently visited.

John went through a number of his images on the computer and explained the stories behind each one. I sensed that he enjoyed working with the community, but wondered to what extent he allowed the participants to deviate from his vision. It did not seem appropriate at that stage to interview him, so I did this a few months later by telephone. John generously burnt a CD ROM for me so that I could take the images to talk them over with Malcom. He also gave me a catalogue from the *PlaceMats* exhibition to look at. Although I wasn't keen to re-exhibit work, he told me that students from the North and South had been involved in the project, but it hadn't been shown in the North. We also talked about the fact that it would need to be reconfigured for a smaller space, and this of course would change its overall look. John also told me he is showing in a number of exhibitions this year, and needed to sit down and do a lot of planning; although at this point he seemed fully committed to show in *Partnership or Perish?* The meeting ended positively and John encouraged me to look at his exhibition at the Moonah Arts Centre titled *House of Silverfish*.³⁶

Vella emailed the next day, and it was obvious that he was thinking seriously about the exhibition: 'Great to catch up with you the other day. Would appreciate it if you could please confirm the exhibition dates as I am trying to map out 2006 in my diary.'³⁷

On 15 December, Vella kindly sent an email about collaborative research. I really appreciated this gesture on his behalf and felt that he understood what I was doing on both a theoretical and practical level. In January, Bywaters and I had another exhibition meeting. We went through and discussed numerous images of Vella's work, and we both felt *PlaceMats* was the most appropriate for the collaborative premise of the exhibition. I sent the gallery plans to Vella so that he could begin visualising how the work would look in the Academy Gallery space. Once again, I did not encounter a storming stage as the roles of curator and artist were clearly defined, and we were both working towards the same goal.

³⁶ Extract from field notes by Margaret Baguley, 12/12/05.

³⁷ Email from John Vella to Margaret Baguley, 13/12/05, 11.52am.

Norming: John Vella and Tasmanian Students

Emails between John Vella and I continued throughout January and February, 2006.

These were mostly concerned with various options for exhibiting *PlaceMats*:

PlaceMats sounds like a good option. (Including the photographs yes??... a recent development is to data project the photographs onto a wall as a backdrop and allow viewers to sit on the carpets and watch the images ... alternatively I may place them in elcheapo albums ...) no problems reconfiguring the piece for the available space. Lettering issues can be resolved later but it would be good to acknowledge the participants etc., esp given the show is about collaboration ...³⁸

This part of the norming stage allowed feedback and encouragement, and enabled us to start working together to produce a challenging and insightful exhibition about the collaborative process engaged in by artists for the exhibition. Bywaters and I discussed the data projector and knew that the room would have to be darkened for it to work effectively which would affect the integrity of the other work. Bywaters then suggested the albums would be a better option. Vella's final installation, however, did not include albums, but a presentation system for photographs, achieved by cutting slots in the vertical wooden strips:

I've decided to construct a simple rack system to sit on the wall (slotted lengths of timber) in the gallery so as to be able to present the photographs in a kind of postcard/sample card context as opposed to using albums (carpets still on the floor). Could you please shoot me the dimensions (length and height) of that wall (the one that will sit behind my mats ...) when you get a chance as I'd like the proportion of the racks to relate to the wall scale. If the racks concern you we can talk about it ...³⁹

I emailed Vella back on the same day to say I was having an exhibition meeting with Bywaters that day, as I knew I would need to discuss the racks with him. Vella also decided, particularly with the rack system he had in mind to install the work himself:

³⁸ Email from John Vella to Margaret Baguley, 31/1/06, 11.06am.

³⁹ Email from John Vella to Margaret Baguley, 4/5/06, 8.28am.

Just checking in to get deadlines confirmed ... is it easier if I drive my work up in the first week of July and set up then. What are the earliest dates I can set up and when does the work have to be installed by? Also is there someone who can be on hand to assist who's a bit handy? Might not be necessary but wouldn't hurt ... Also I have some extra labels I'd like to include with the work and I will have them with me to show you ... photocopies taken from sections of the catalogue.⁴⁰

Bywaters said that was a wonderful idea and would organise the gallery volunteers to be available, to help Vella set up. The norming stage was evidenced by people understanding their roles within this process, and ensuring that they fulfilled their commitments during this time.

Performing: John Vella and Tasmanian Students

During the installation day John Vella spent most of it installing his work. One of the gallery volunteers worked with him to ensure everything went smoothly. Vella had already cut the pieces of wood and slotted them, so all he needed to do was measure the wall and then place the work. There was one moment of tension when he realised the wall measurements included the base, and this meant that the longer pieces of wood were floating a few centimetres above the floor. After some discussion we decided that it looked quite good and should be left that way. It took most of the morning to put up the lengths of wood.

Vella placed the photographs in each of the slots in a fairly random manner, but then started to group them as he went. I felt that the spaces between the groupings were really quite interesting and suggested he may like to leave some of them there. We discussed this for a while and he decided to put them all in, and then have a look at the overall effect when he was finished. The final layout actually did look like it had gaps in it, because some of the colours in the photographs actually matched the colour of the wall, and seemed to blend into it. Vella's decision to fill in all the spaces was the most appropriate. He asked me where I felt there were strong spaces of colour so that we could spread these out more evenly. I felt we had worked well together trying

⁴⁰ Email from John Vella to Margaret Baguley, 8/6/06, 4.51pm.

to achieve the effect he envisioned. It took much longer to install than we thought, but I knew that Vella was very pleased with the final effect and he spent some time just ‘being’ with the work when he had finished. Vella drove up from Hobart for the opening a few days later where his work achieved positive feedback. The performing stage with Vella had resulted in a strong work which was well sited in the gallery space.

Responses to the Interview Schedule: Victorian Tapestry Workshop & Geoffrey Ricardo

The following section contains responses to the interview schedule from each group of artists summarised under the themes of collaboration, gender and acknowledgment.

The Bairnsdale Tapestry, commissioned by the Bairnsdale Regional Health Service (BRHS), was inspired from a painting by the Melbourne artist Geoffrey Ricardo. He was engaged in the artist in residence program at BRHS and asked to create an image that would represent the hospital, with the intention of using this image to provide subject matter for a tapestry. Ricardo has depicted the daily bustle of the hospital, within a surrealist background, which allowed the viewer to focus on the individuals and how they are interconnected within the Bairnsdale community. The tapestry was woven by weavers Sue Batten and John Dicks from the Victorian Tapestry Workshop (VTW) in Melbourne.

As stated earlier, the process began with a discussion of the painting between the weavers and the artist. This was particularly important when the tapestry was to be on a much larger scale than a painting. Ricardo, who is also a printmaker, had previously worked with the VTW. The weavers were aware of his sensibility and interpreted the tapestry to reflect harder edges than those depicted in the painting. They also cleaned up background areas so that objects were clearer and more easily read by the viewer.⁴¹ Ricardo purposefully did not intend to complete a finished picture, and left ‘some of it sort of just vague, knowing that areas of the tapestry itself would speak better if it was treated in terms of just tapestry.’⁴² He trusted the weavers to use their own experience and expertise to create his painting into an entirely new medium and art work. When

⁴¹ Interview with Sue Batten and John Dicks 1/12/04 by Margaret Baguley at the VTW, Melbourne.

⁴² Phone interview with Geoffrey Ricardo 24/5/06 by Margaret Baguley.

the tapestry and the art work are exhibited together, as they were in the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition, it became clear how Batten and Dicks had dealt with complex issues such as scale, interpretation and translation in collaboration with the artist, to create *The Bairnsdale Tapestry*.

I had already used the interview schedule to discuss collaboration, gender and acknowledgment during my interview with Batten and Dicks for the VTW case study. Some additional responses from them will be quoted here with specific reference to *The Bairnsdale Tapestry*. During my residency at the VTW at least thirty centimetres of *The Bairnsdale Tapestry* had been woven. The interviews with the weavers and Susie Shears were all conducted at the VTW, in December 2004 and October 2005 respectively, and the interview with Ricardo was by telephone in May 2006.

Collaboration

Geoffrey Ricardo is well known as a printmaker, and therefore the approach that Batten and Dicks took to interpreting his oil painting was to clean up a lot of the edges. They also heightened the palette from Ricardo's original painting, which gave greater warmth to the tapestry. When I asked Dicks how the process began he described it as follows:

JD: What happens in the initial phase is that what we do is we look at the work and we decided with this, what we do is with this, because Geoff is actually a printmaker. We turn it, we try to make it look more like one of his prints, then, although it's an oil painting. So what we did was we limited the palette and what we initially did, was we did samples, some colour strips, and Geoff came in and looked at the colour strips we did and said "No, it's too cool. If you did the faces like that, it would look like they're dying." [Laughs] So we did exactly the same colours, we mixed them, we warmed up the palette so that the flesh tones started to work as flesh tones.

MB: So mixing on the bobbin, bringing in with a limited palette, the same colours?

JD: Yes, exactly the same colours as we did on the cool one, but with a different combination of it, and we warmed it up, and then we did a strip

and a couple of samples of it and he loved it. So then we just went ahead and started to do it.⁴³

Batten and Dicks respected the choices Ricardo had made in his painting. Instead of warming up the palette immediately, they wove colour samples based on Ricardo's original cooler palette. Dicks told me they had realised that it was too cool, but part of their approach was to work with the artist. After viewing the colour samples, the weavers and Ricardo discussed the effects. In the final tapestry the same choice of colours were used from the rejected sample, but the quantities were different to achieve the warmer effect. It was also clear that Ricardo had been commissioned to create a painting, which was destined to become the design for a tapestry. I was intrigued as to how the weavers undertook this process of translation with one another and asked Dicks to explain:

JD: So often we look at each other's areas and talk about it. I mean I'm less inclined to kind to ... criticise. I might suggest something to Sue, like a colour or something, or you know we talk about an area and say what do you think of this, because it's very complicated. Because it's quite tricky when you look at the painting ... wondering what areas things are in. So we do talk about it. So I'm thinking about this, what do you think? So I look at it, and I think that's alright, or ...

MB: And does that happen fairly frequently during the day?

JD: Pretty much.

MB: So you'll just bounce off each other?

JD: Yes, I think it all has to do with ... yes. That's right, because Sue is so much more experienced than me. She'll say if something is not working, and she'll say it is trial and error. But often she'll know if it is a dark or a light colour and how to create the effect that you want.

MB: The thing is, you're so exposed here, so everything you do is immediately obvious. So, I suppose that must help with the process as well, that you're not concealed?

⁴³ Interview with VTW weaver John Dicks at the VTW, 2/12/04, Melbourne, Victoria.

JD: That's right, because if you do hide something and it doesn't work then you take it out, and you try something else. That happens quite a lot. Especially when you're putting in a new colour. Yes, I mean you can mix some yellows together and say that looks right but when you put it in it looks too flat or too boring. So you have to take it away and change it and maybe put in a colour, or ... enlarge an area.⁴⁴

From this extract of our interview it is clear that Dicks was working in an artistic way. He constantly made decisions, standing back from the work to look at the overall effect. When he felt the colours were not working, he would take them out and rewind the bobbin with a new combination of colours. Sue Batten also discussed how this process works in interpreting an artwork into a tapestry:

So that's where you develop your palette and you talk about things like, you know, you are you going to break up the imagery ... are you going to make everything very soft, which you can really easily with tapestry, or break things up into shapes, you know like this sort of thing. You know there's all sorts of decisions.⁴⁵

Using guidelines, grids, and overhead projectors to copy and enlarge are not unheard of in artistic circles. The difficulty that some people seem to have with the collaborative process at the VTW was that the design was not originally that of the weavers. However, when the painting or print is compared to the finished tapestry the differences are obvious; as are the choices and decisions that the weavers had made. One of the difficulties for the weavers was that the tapestry is rolled down and around the roller as it is woven, so the entire piece cannot be seen in its entirety until completion. Unlike a painter, the weaver cannot go back to their starting point and touch up particular colours; this can only be done, if required, shortly after a colour has been woven.⁴⁶ Batten acknowledged that the large scale of the tapestries had affected Ricardo's work, resulting in him creating a series of prints which were over a metre in size. Ricardo was inspired by the fact, Batten also noted, that the weavers

⁴⁴ Interview with VTW weaver John Dicks, VTW, 2/12/04, Melbourne, Victoria.

⁴⁵ Interview with VTW weaver Sue Batten, VTW, 1/12/04, Melbourne, Victoria.

⁴⁶ To undo even an inch of a commissioned tapestry would mean it may not be completed by the agreed date, and would also have consequences for the overall budget of that project.

were prepared to spend six months on a work, which had caused him to reconsider the pace of his production. Batten also told me that a number of artists come to the VTW because of its reputation, given its philosophy and willingness to collaborate with artists.

Susie Shears told me that the VTW do not pursue work with people, who do not possess a collaborative spirit. In reference to Ricardo, Shears noted how important it was that he was a regular visitor to the workshop:

But the time commitment, you know something as simple as that is very important, and ah, we appreciated Geoff Ricardo coming in often, numerous times, over the course of the project, to see all the progress of the work to have the contact with the weavers.⁴⁷

When I spoke to Ricardo about the collaborative process, he also reinforced the fact that he had a prior relationship with the workshop, which had been beneficial to both parties, and he was familiar with their working processes. He also talked about the act of giving his art work to the workshop and how he felt about this process:

GR: And so then, I didn't know what to expect, because I knew that it would change, and I knew that I wouldn't be able to have control in the final thing because it's somebody else's hand and um, you know, drawing and design, and they're going to interpret it and being tapestry it actually doesn't translate literally like a drawing you know. A drawn line isn't the same in tapestry, it's got to be basically constructed dot by dot.

MB: That's right. And how did you feel about that, sort of handing over?

GR: Probably nervous, but because I was a bit overwhelmed by it, and knew that I just ... it just felt, I think the message was to trust people. And then I thought oh it's kind of, and then I thought, well it's really interesting to um, to ... let your work go through, you know, someone else's eyes. You know, like you know, at the very least I could learn something.

⁴⁷ Interview with VTW Director Susie Shears at the VTW, Melbourne, 19/10/05.

MB: Mmm. Oh yeah, that's a really open, open approach too.

GR: Yeah, well I kind of can't think of any other way to do it.

Fortunately. Unless you try and fight and try and control the image all the way.

MB: Oh [laughs].

GR: Well you know, I've seen people just do that.

MB: Yeah, they do. I, but I think they choose artists they, that they know

...

GR: They can work with.

MB: ... are more receptive.

GR: Well I think after I'd done my first one then that put me down in the good books.⁴⁸

Ricardo's comments correlated with those of Shears, by indicating that the VTW choose artists who they believe are receptive to the flexibility required during the collaborative process. The artist needs to be able to let go of their image and work with the weavers, as Shears noted, to transform it into another art work. When I asked Ricardo how the collaborative process worked with *The Bairnsdale Tapestry* he replied:

The good thing about it, because I've done it before, was that I knew I could trust, I was sort of familiar with ... so the good thing about actually having done it before was, um, I could leave a lot up to them, and work out a lot of when it came to sitting down and interpreting the work. So I actually didn't intend to do a finished, a finished picture. It was like leaving, leaving some of it sort of just vague, and knowing that areas of the tapestry itself would speak better if it was treated in terms of just ... tapestry. It just depends on how precious you are with your image and your idea and whether you just need to control everything. I guess that's that thing where if you're going to work with someone, how much sort of, what sort of percentage are you going to work with them. Are they going

⁴⁸ Phone interview with artist Geoffrey Ricardo, 24/5/06.

to be working for you, or are you going to be working for them, or are you going to be working with them.⁴⁹

Ricardo acknowledged the issue of trust in a collaborative process and also touched on the issue of ego, by referring to the way the artist views their work and the level of control they exert over an image, if they are working with other people. I asked Ricardo about particular decisions, such as warming up the palette from his original oil painting and how the weavers responded to this suggestion:

MB: And there's a lot of preparatory work of course.

GR: Yeah.

MB: So they've got it right before they ...

GR: Well, they've got a feeling for it. Even if they haven't got it right, they've got a feeling for it. And when they start getting things on the loom ... then like all things they can, you know, because it goes so slowly they've got time to think through it.

MB: Yeah.

GR: Which they felt, they thought anyway, and they said they thought that. [Referring to the weaver's knowing that the colours were too cool.]

MB: Oh that's good isn't it. So, how did you, um, were there any problems when you did have to say something like that?

GR: Nuh. It was all very open.

MB: It was all very ... yeah, just a very open conversation.

GR: Oh yeah, yep.⁵⁰

The responses from all the participants concerned with *The Bairnsdale Tapestry* provided a clear description of how Ricardo worked with Batten and Dicks to create another art work. Each respected the skills of the other, and ultimately a learning process took place for each of them. The collaborative process on *The Bairnsdale Tapestry* was based on mutual respect and understanding, trust, flexibility and open and sustained communication between the weavers and artist.

⁴⁹ Phone interview with artist Geoffrey Ricardo, 24/5/06.

⁵⁰ Phone interview with artist Geoffrey Ricardo, 24/5/06.

Gender

When I discussed the issue of gender with Shears, she noted that Dicks at that stage was the only male weaver at the VTW. She felt that this was a reflection of the group they were drawing from, who were specifically art school graduates.

Ricardo noted that he has mainly worked with women at the VTW, because Dicks was the only male weaver. I asked him if he felt that gender affected the collaborative process. He revealed that if there was a difference in perception between males and females then it probably would. Ricardo then laughed and admitted that he thought men and women were different: 'I mean people think it's all just nurture, but hey there's a little bit of nature in there.'⁵¹ He did not, however, relate this to his experience of working with Batten on *The Bairnsdale Tapestry*. The perception that personality had a greater impact on the collaborative process was repeated by a number of participants in this study. The feminine attributes of empathy, nurturance, compassion and sensitivity has been identified in the literature (John-Steiner, 2000; Farrell, 2001) as complementing the collaborative process. However, they cannot be attributed solely to women.

Acknowledgment

The Victorian Tapestry Workshop acknowledges the group leader who interpreted the art work, the weavers who wove the tapestry and the artist on all documentation, including gallery didactics and catalogues. This attribution reinforced their belief in the collaborative process by valuing each person involved. I contacted the VTW when we were preparing the labels for the exhibition, and they were quite happy for Batten and Dicks to be acknowledged as the VTW weavers who wove the tapestry. However, it was clearly stated that they were to be identified as being part of the Victorian Tapestry Workshop.

Responses to the Interview Schedule: S!X – Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd

I gathered the responses for this interview schedule when I met Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd in October, 2005. The conversation was lively and wide ranging, and they were very passionate about their work. They also often finished each other's sentences and had similar points of view on a number of issues. It was difficult to

⁵¹ Phone interview with artist Geoff Ricardo, 24/5/06.

direct the conversation as there were many tangents they wished to discuss as well. We initially talked about the difficulties for creative people working in a university context, and the pressure to achieve further study in addition to exhibitions and publications.

Collaboration & Gender

When we spoke about the process of collaboration Sprynskyj and Boyd discussed other fashion designers who contend they use a collaborative process. In reality, however, they take sections of the work and work on them independently. I took this opportunity to ask Sprynskyj and Boyd about their process of working together:

MB: So how do you come up with your ideas? Is it really, do you work together? Like, do you come in and say I think I'm doing this?

PB: It's hard to answer all those in a succinct way ... how do you come up with, because we're together all the time, an idea ... though we work in a cyclical way, in terms of we follow seasons, you know fashion.⁵²

Boyd then explained that he and Sprynskyj were always aware of what they were doing because they work on collections. He felt they never had a 'start' time, as they would have been talking about the work for months beforehand. He also noted that they might have a range of influences. This could occur from exhibitions they saw, or from when they were travelling together. These types of opportunities could inspire the next body of work: 'Not really a season. Just about a new ... yeah. A new idea, a new body of work that's different, and then it turns into a season.' Sprynskyj and Boyd told me that they had known each for about fifteen years. They first met at university when they were in the same course and major. Sprynskyj and Boyd both admitted they were very competitive, but explained that this was a positive quality in their working process: 'It's not good to become too familiar, because you become lazy. So that's any good partnership or collaboration. You still have that, and you need respect for the person, but then you also need that fire ...'

Sprynskyj and Boyd's share a vision of fashion which ultimately underpins their label *S/X*. They both appeared to have a realistic perception of the fashion world, and what

⁵² Interview with Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd, *S/X*, 21/10/05.

they saw as their place within it. They explained their method of using found clothing which forms the basis of their work was initially from necessity, as they did not have enough money to buy expensive fabrics. Sprynskyj and Boyd spend a lot of time together. The elements of fun and passion are essential to their working process. Boyd noted that perhaps some people would get bored spending so much time together, but revealed that this was not the case for him and Sprynskyj. As we discussed collaboration further Sprynskyj mentioned that people have particular perceptions of the way they work:

DS: And we've been through so many things. Just as a partnership. Haven't we Peter. With ... people's perceptions – outside – like they're really [pause], well I suppose, he designs, and then, the male designer, and then you get the [inaudible]. Don't they. Remember when we went through all of that.

PB: Yeah, yeah, and there's a different job description in people's practice.

DS/PB: In people's minds. [Together]

PB: You do the cloth, or you do the textiles ...

DS: I'd say [inaudible], so she must be doing the textiles. I mean he's doing the designing, like yeah sure.

PB: ... and you work in separate rooms.

MB: Oh that's such a stereotype.

DS: Mmmm.

MB: Actually that's really come up, um, the gender aspect of collaboration.

PB: Gender's a big thing, especially in fashion, you know ...

DS: Especially when you look at it in a traditional sense, um, you know male designers.

MB: Mmm.

DS: Karl Lagerfeld

MB: Oh yeah, yeah.

DS: Yves St Laurent [Laughs]. It's just clearly conservative thinking.

From my research viewpoint, it was interesting to hear that Sprynskyj and Boyd raised the issue of gender in fashion. The fact that people attribute the designing to Boyd and the making to Sprynskyj appeared to be related to the craft of construction in fashion, as something women were attributed with. The more creative artistic sphere of designing has traditionally been attributed to the male. Textiles have traditionally been associated with women; however, social and cultural stereotyping had further infiltrated this sphere through attributing the designing of textiles to men.

As we discussed collaboration further, we talked about how various designers utilise other people in the creation of their garments and inaccurately call it collaboration. Boyd felt that the word collaboration had been misconstrued, and used an example of a well known fashion designer who had worked with a textile designer and described it as a collaborative process. Boyd then recognised the difficulty in trying to define the word collaboration and noted it was something that needed to be ‘teased out.’ Sprynskyj and Boyd both agreed that sectioning off work to other people was not collaboration, and they worked on all aspects of the garments together. They said it would be easier if they were able to take different sections because they wanted to be seen as fashion designers. However, because people have to order units of their garments, they also have to have a system in place for reproductions. In this respect no garment is the same, because they all have a particular hand-worked feature on them. Sprynskyj and Boyd noted that they have had to explain to their clients that they cannot become addicted to one look, because the nature of dyeing cloth is unpredictable. During really busy times Sprynskyj and Boyd have employed people to just undertake the cutting of the pattern pieces, also known as the *toile*, which they have already designed themselves, but they do not see this as detracting from their process, and was a necessity due to the requirements of production.

Acknowledgment

Denise Sprynskyj and Peter Boyd never discuss *S/X* in their lectures or in other public presentations unless they are both there. They did acknowledge that this was difficult for people to comprehend at first, but now with more designers ostensibly working together it has become easier. The way Sprynskyj and Boyd view each other’s involvement reflects their choice of label:

PB: It's, it's funny even in our label and our name, that's, that's very important in fashion too. We can't change that. It's a label and people need to connect with that label. Now they can either connect with it one way, in terms of personalities ...

DS: Mmm.

PB: That is Chanel, Gautier – their names – they belong to someone. We don't use our names. We use a word that is really not indicative of us, and says nothing about us.

DS: Yeah.

PB: But we hope people connect with the design, or clothing.

MB: I love the exclamation mark [reference to the *S/X* brand]

DS: Yeah. [laughs]

MB: It's really ... who came up with it?

DS: Peter's friend.

PB: Yeah [deleted] .. designer. DS: Didn't he. [Together]

DS: Initially it was an "I" turned upside down. But then we couldn't get that font ... and then it turned into an exclamation mark. PB/DS: And then it turned into an exclamation mark. [Together]

[Everyone talking together]

MB: It has a really nice impact because you ... DS: Yeah, and people are really curious about it ... they say, "Now that does that mean?" PB: Yeah, "What does that mean?" [Laughter]

DS: You know, [affected voice] "What is the philosophy behind that?"

[Laughter] Well it was our room number, and we really didn't want to put our personalities into it.

PB: Mmm. [agreement]

DS: Like Peter said, we needed to keep that neutral.

As noted in chapter two, greater value tends to be placed on the first word in a pair, and it is clear from this extract that Sprynskyj and Boyd circumvented this situation by choosing a neutral word which had meaning to both of them, but which did not privilege either one. In keeping with this approach the label *S/X* is actually stamped on the clothing, so that it becomes part of the clothing itself, rather than as an attached label.

Responses to the Interview Schedule: Turpin Crawford Studio – Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford

Turpin and Crawford work with a range of specialists including, structural and mechanical engineers, physicists, landscape architects, fluvial geomorphologists, developers, sub-contractors, biologists, hydraulic engineers, metallurgists, and sanitation and water treatment specialists. The preservation of artistic integrity throughout these projects, particularly when dealing with such a diverse group of people, was paramount. For the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition they provided scale drawings of their work, some of which has been created, and others which exist in the proposal stages. A DVD featuring significant works such as *Tied to Tide*, based in Sydney Harbour, revealed the scale and significance of their public works interacting with natural phenomena such as wind and water. The effect was timeless, rhythmic and provided the viewer with a time for reflection and introspection.

Collaboration

During the interview it became clear that Turpin and Crawford have a number of similar interests. They had both trained to be art historians and then decided to become artists, majoring in sculpture. Turpin and Crawford stated that they both have the same aesthetic, in addition to an interest in working environmentally and collaboratively. Turpin stated that: ‘... we’ve found that over time we both respond to the same things. We’re both interested in movement, we’re both interested in the way natural phenomena affect, affects the way something might move.’⁵³ Crawford recalled: ‘... so there was a whole lot of things that were going on ... interests that I had that were collaborative and environmental, and very specific to a particular site, to a particular community. And those, and when we started working together, all those interests kind of just came together.’ Turpin and Crawford said that the process of bringing an idea to the concept stage can sometimes be quite quick, or take much longer than they thought:

JT: And I think that, it’s that very spark of kind of sparking off each other. You know, one person might have the bones of an idea, and might kind of throw it out, and then the other person will pick it up, and the conversation

⁵³ Interview with Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford on the 17/10/05 by Margaret Baguley at the Turpin Crawford Studio, Sydney.

will begin where we would throw ideas around and oftentimes that process could be really quick. And often that would happen away from the studio, sometimes in an aeroplane or ...

MC: On a bike, or on the telephone ... [Laughter]

JT: But sometimes it could take a long time to tease out to get the concept for the site, 'cause it's always about finding the idea that is right for that location.

MC: Mmm. [Agreement]

JT: And right in meaning and function and all of those things, and ...

MC: We ... yeah those things happen or they don't,

JT: Or they don't.

MC: but they happen in their own time. Sometimes it can be really 'sparky' and you can have it the minute you go there. You know exactly what you want to do. And we both just go "Yep" and off it goes, and other times it can be months.

JT: Yeah, it can be like dragging teeth, pulling teeth.

MC: But then it would happen.

As Turpin and Crawford became more ambitious in the scale of their projects, they had to seek out the expertise of other people such as structural engineers, yet they still retained the integrity of their own vision. Turpin and Crawford noted that even though they may have access to a budget, support, and expertise necessary when being commissioned to do large public projects; there still had to be a 'sort of mad drive and passion behind it.' The initial part of their working process was collaborative, but they do take on separate roles during a project, but kept coming back together to ensure they were working towards the same goal. They described a particular project which had begun to deviate from their shared vision, and how they dealt with this particular issue:

JT: But there was a point with the Fan where it kind of ran away from our unified vision.

MC: Mmm. [Agreement]

JT: And we, and it was going down a certain path. We had a designer working with us who was, who kind of took it down a certain path to

some degree. And then it was kind of going down a very complex path and we, and it's always important that the final resolution of our works is JT/MC: Simple.

JT: That arriving at simplicity is the most difficult thing. It's not usually a starting point.

JT: So going back to the Fan we had, we, that form that you see it in, finally, [gesturing to maquette] it wasn't like that, for a long time those blades were facing the other way, or they were all facing the same way or something.

MC: Mmm. [Agreement]

JT: And it took one morning of us working here on our own without any engineers or any other people around working down in the workshop, in a matter of three or four hours we had just gone 'Bingo'. And that's how it should be. But it took months to get to that point. And...

MC: I think the process was so complicated with the needs of engineering and everybody else that comes in, that the beginning you have an idea which is quite simple and elegant as an idea, but then it goes off in this, all these people and all these things ...

Although Turpin and Crawford delegated tasks between them, they do so in respect to the others' expertise, or they feel that one was more temperamentally suited to that particular task. It was evident that there was continual discussion and communication about the process taking place. From this short extract, it was also obvious that although expertise from other people was necessary, Turpin and Crawford could recognise when it may affect their finely tuned process.

Gender

The impetus behind the work of Turpin and Crawford was to distil the essence of the work, so that its distillation created a resonance felt by the viewer. They likened the slower movement in their work to feminine rhythms. To enable this to happen Turpin and Crawford discussed the issues of complexity underpinning their work which would be eventually simplified through a continual process of refinement:

JT: That arriving at simplicity is the most difficult thing. It's not usually a starting point.

MC: No. And even though you know you have to go there you often have to be complex to. You have to get quite complex to refine it back to being quite simple. Sometimes the idea develops through the complexity and then ends up quite sim ... in quite a simple way. Sometimes that complexity stays.

JT: Yeah.

MC: The essence of it stays in the simple form, but if you haven't gone on that journey, I don't know.

JT: You can't justify it.

MB: It looks really derivative then, doesn't it.

JT: If you haven't gone through the path, the learning path.

MB: But it doesn't have those layers.

JT/MC: Yeah.

MC: And we would never have come to the particular form that we've come to. The sort of distilled version without the complexity behind it.

JT: Yeah. You can ...

MC: For us it's always that process. We know it will be simple in its form in the end.

Although they did not specifically refer to gender in their work, they described it as having feminine rhythms. They discussed working in a way that could be described as gentle, lyrical and graceful. Turpin and Crawford revealed that they were not looking for anything specific in the work itself, but were seeking to establish a relationship between the audience and the work. They described this relationship as always being crucial to what they were doing. Turpin and Crawford explained that they were seeking a bodily, not an intellectual, response from their work. They did not want the viewer to be thinking about how the sculpture or installation was working, but to engage with the sensation first. I asked them if what they were describing was a resonance with the work and Crawford replied: 'Yes, in your memory, in your body of what you've experienced.' In this section of the interview Turpin and Crawford both alluded to the distinction between reason (male) and emotion (female) in their work, which was one of the dichotomies referred to in chapter two. Their description

on how they engage with the site revealed a holistic approach which incorporated the history, features and community of the place the work would be situated:

MC: I mean the really important thing is that we don't come together in a vacuum we're always in with a site. So the site of the work is the thing ...

JT: We also have the conversation ...

MC:but the whole thing. If we looked at the whole thing as a conversation the site's the most important thing, no, there aren't any ideas without the site. So that's the ... we're also collaborating with the site. So there's two artists, a site in a physical form, and the natural elements. So there's all these sort of things that come into play. So on a site we'd go and look for ... we'd look at the physical characteristics as a natural context or a built environment, and we'd be looking at you know, all sorts of things about that, how it is as a form, what the context is, the history of the site, the people who use it, the energy of the place, the way... then we'd start to look at the way the light works and the wind works, and the water works or whatever happens to be there. And once we've really understood all those things then we start to embed, an idea comes out of that, so it's not like sitting in a studio and carving a something, and then putting it and then go okay I've carved it ...

When I asked specifically, if Turpin and Crawford thought they could work with a male artist to produce the same type of work, they replied that it was a difficult question to answer without knowing the person. Crawford said that she had only ever worked with other women 'at this kind of closeness,' but working with a male artist was not part of her experience. Turpin and Crawford felt that it really came down to the personality of the person you were working with:

MC: I think it's rare, it happens, and it's rare. It's not an easy thing to do, it's not at all, and you both somehow have to know all the things that you have to drop, and all the things that you have to pick up to make that work... and you just have to be very generous. Generous spirited. Otherwise it can't happen I don't think. It doesn't mean that men can't do that, I certainly don't think that women are in the thing ...

MB: No, it would be the personality ...

JT/MC: The personality ... yeah.

MC: And some people need ... personality, yeah it's definitely personality.

JT: I mean David Haines and Joyce Hinterding

MC: Gilbert & George, Marina [Abramovic] and Ulay ...

MB: And Charles [Green] and Lyndall [Brown].

MC: Yeah, that's right, and everybody sort of does it in varying kind of ways, in what they do.

Although Turpin and Crawford both felt that the personality of the person would influence their working relationship more than gender, they revealed that they had faced particular gender issues in their partnership. They described an incident when they were planning the *Storm Waters* project, and were working with a woman designer. The project required them to oversee the concrete fabricators at a remote location. Turpin said that when the three women arrived with their plans and drawings the fabricators would say: 'Here come the lionesses.' Crawford replied that they had to be quite tough with the fabricators, and Turpin added because they wanted to build things in a 'shonky' way. Crawford felt that sometimes in those situations it helped to have a few people to support one another. Turpin added:

JT: Yes, so in that case it was quite good being three, because our third person had a degree of technical expertise that neither of us had.

MC: Yes, so nobody could put anything over her which was very good.

MB: Oh that's good. I suppose you would be dealing with a lot of men for these projects.

JT: Oh yes.

MC: Mostly, and mostly that's not a problem. Mostly it's respectful and it's fine. It's not awful because we're girls and they're men or anything, but sometimes you know there's the client and their engineer and the builders and the board. And around a table you might have a dozen people.

JT: And there might be a dozen of them and two of us.

MC: If there's only one of you that can be incredibly ... and you know projects are so complicated, there's so much stuff you have to keep in your head. Oftentimes, you know, it needs the two of us to be able to, because you know we've both been working on different things, and you turn up to a meeting and you know your stuff, but you don't know the other stuff so well. You know, it's just the team, it needs that.

Crawford noted that there were quite a few traditional attitudes about what women should or should not be doing, especially in the building industry. The support for each other during these projects was paramount to Turpin and Crawford, and they always present a united front, similar to *S/X* when presenting plans for commission. The complexity involved in working in public art necessitates the dividing up of particular tasks, which both Turpin and Crawford saw as integral to the way they approach a project. They felt that perhaps their insistence on joint presentations may diminish their work in some people's eyes, but emphasised that it was a necessary part of their working process:

MC: And it reflects the two, the way we've broken up the project. There's no way that Jenny's going to know all the things that I've been doing and vice versa, so you know you just have to, to come up like that. I mean a lot of people have said "Why do there have to be the two of you? Do you two always come together?" And you think yes, but you need that.

JT: Like that's where one specialises in finding out about all the bronze, you know we've got to cast all these bronze bits (the edges of the steps), so one person become knowledgeable about that, while the other person is dealing with the concrete, or you know...

MC: Which is exactly what architects or engineers would do.

MB: So do some people find it a bit threatening when both of you turn up?

MC: Oh no, they don't find it threatening.

JT: No.

MC: They probably diminish it or something, it could be seen as a bit 'girly' or something, when the two of you turn up. No, as we've aged. We were such young things when we started.

MB: Oh.

MC: Well you know we were, and that makes a really big difference with how people respond to you.

MB: It does.

MC: You know a few grey hairs are great. [Laughter]

This extract revealed that although Turpin and Crawford need not seem unduly perturbed by gender issues in their dealings with other people, they have experienced them. However, they do not appear to have affected the collaborative process between Turpin and Crawford.

Acknowledgment

During the interview with Turpin and Crawford, a discussion ensued about the notion of ego, and how it had to be submerged in a collaborative process. Crawford noted that in order to collaborate effectively you have to stop worrying about yourself, and concern yourself with the work. She also said that it could not just be one person's version of the particular work. Crawford described the shared aspect of the collaboration as being fluid. Turpin added that in addition to respecting one another's views on things, they also respect the process, and the fact that the outcome of the process could be better than what they would have created individually. Turpin felt this occurred through their extensive conversations, and the trust they have in one another to really critique their ideas. She said that they had to be very open and trusting with one another for that to occur. Crawford explained that their individual egos were not invested in pushing an idea that was not working, and in this respect it was easier to let go of unsuccessful ideas: '... whereas with the two of us you just go ...it's just gone. We don't hang onto it.'

It was evident from this conversation that Turpin and Crawford were comfortable in providing constructive criticism to each other. Turpin and Crawford both revealed that neither of them takes credit for their joint work; and both of their names are cited on any documentation associated with their work.

Responses to the Interview Schedule: John Vella and Tasmanian Students

John Vella has undertaken a number of community projects, some of which he described as having a collaborative process to them. Vella was interested in structures and hierarchies that equally apply to objects and situations and ‘if it happens to require collaboration or community, then that’s what I use.’⁵⁴ He believed that it was important that collaborators, who are not artists, see an aspect of themselves physically manifested in the work.

PlaceMats featured in the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition was a work which involved students from schools and colleges in Launceston and Hobart. The premise was for the students to draw the floor plans of their home interiors, and include furniture already in the home. These diagrams were then cut out of the carpet pieces to produce a series of punctuated and irregular shapes. These pieces, affectionately known as *PlaceMats*, were then exchanged so that they became a ‘visitor’ into the home of another student. The carpet piece was then documented with a disposable camera, wherever the student felt like placing it in their home. *PlaceMats* created a situation where the work became an essential part of the students’ lives for an intense period of time. The process allowed an intimacy to develop with another family’s living space, albeit with a degree of separation involved. By photographing the carpet piece in another environment, the students acknowledged its presence in their own lives. There was also a tacit acceptance of what was contained in the carpet – hair, odours, skin cells and other detritus. The carpet had become an honorary family member engaging in a ‘sleep over’. Vella implicated the viewer in this voyeuristic activity by providing the carpet pieces and photographs for the viewer.

Collaboration

I was interested to see how Vella would describe collaboration, given that the participants in *PlaceMats* were students, and therefore did not have the same expertise and experience as him. I asked Vella about his working process to see what general approach he takes, and how it changed when he works with other people. He responded by saying that he begins with an idea that he is interested in and wishes to explore further. If the idea requires certain people to be a part of it, then he

⁵⁴ Phone interview with John Vella on 5/5/06 by Margaret Baguley.

approached the necessary gatekeepers, or the people themselves, to discuss the idea with them. Vella explained that at this point he wanted people to be part of it, to speak their language, and for them to share in the process. He revealed that he did not force ideas onto his participants, but surrendered some of his control so they would not feel tokenised.

Because Vella did not have the established longer term relationship with his participants, unlike the VTW, S/X and the Turpin Crawford Studio, it appeared that his view of collaboration reflected a business approach. Vella's collaborations are often supported by voluntary participants, which may mean their goals were not the same as his. Vella noted, that artists working together do not necessarily need to see themselves in the work to validate themselves as artists. However, he has found that voluntary participants from the community 'get really excited about seeing themselves physically manifested in the work.' Vella also noted that he often ends up 'infiltrating' the community and becoming part of it during his projects, and this continued to some extent after the project ended. He also noted that there was a certain degree of sensitivity and inclusiveness required when working with community groups. He qualified this by adding 'there's a point where if you're too sensitive, or too inclusive, then the project becomes more about keeping people happy, rather than making good work.' Vella was referring to the fact that these types of groups required a skilled form of leadership which valued each person's input, yet also enabled projects to move forward. This type of leadership was evident in the case studies of the Parliament House Embroidery and the Victorian Tapestry Workshop.

When I asked Vella what he felt the advantages were to working collaboratively, he replied that the surrendering of control can be beneficial for an artist to experience. He also explained that he felt working collaboratively was a less exclusive form of art making. Vella also noted that when people were working collaboratively they feel more involved in the work. The other advantage he described was becoming part of people's lives for a long period of time. Vella also revealed how he sees contemporary art generating more audiences through collaboration, and believed that art goes through cycles. He felt that at this particular point in time, art had become more community engaged. Currently, he believes that artists are viewed as if they were like anyone else in the community with a particular role to play. He felt that the

community questioned why artists were not operating within the community if they were part of it.

These comments revealed that Vella undertakes extensive planning before commencing his collaborative projects. During these projects he endeavours to involve the participants in a visible way, rather than solely through the process. His form of collaborative leadership engaged with the community, and sought to provide them with evidence of their participation in a process that they or he could not have completed individually.

Gender

Vella did not believe that gender issues affected his working processes, and there was no difference between the way he worked with women and men. He felt that it would only be an issue, if the actual work was about gender issues. Vella explained that the way he works with a group was to find out about the group, to ensure that he was addressing the group correctly. He discussed how there were a number of different issues he needed to filter through his projects, and needing to be aware of this whilst trying to find a particular angle to work with a group. Vella explained that ultimately he tried to encourage people to become part of something that he had instigated. He noted that he had worked with mixed gender groups on his projects, and therefore differences in group interactions were less apparent. I mentioned another artist who found difficulty collaborating with a group of men, and found women easier to talk to. Vella responded: 'It depends on how you address the group too, in terms of power. Like if you're addressing a group of women and you were trying to, ah, control them, or you know, you're going to get resentment and all these other things going on.' It became apparent during the interview that Vella did not consider gender an issue in group work.

Acknowledgment

Vella believed that acknowledging other people involved in his art work was an important way to dissolve the divisions of hierarchies operating within society. He noted that he had found differences between working with artists and with volunteers on community projects. Vella said that artists required more input into collaborative projects, and he needed to be sensitive to this. It could be argued, the issue of other

artists seeking greater ownership in collaborative projects, indicated the presence of the artist's ego. After discussing this a little further, Vella stated that: 'I mean, otherwise, why are we there you know ... it's like if we don't think we've had input into the work, then how is it ours?' He attributed this need for acknowledgment also to the volunteers working on his community projects: 'They were actually artists in their own right and then my job was to bring them together, under the context of a bigger work. So, it's kind of like giving them a licence to be artists or a context.' Working with the community in this way brings up a range of issues concerning collaboration, gender and acknowledgment in Vella's work. He admitted that his projects were slightly subversive:

But, like for example, with the *PlaceMats* project, if I went into the school and said 'Look, what I want to happen is to get, ah, a whole lot of your students to take photos of themselves at home, because I'm interested in acts of self surveillance' and all this kind of stuff, then, they would have run a mile. But because that was framed in the context of taking a carpet home and all this other stuff, people actually didn't realise the full extent of what was happening. The extent wasn't that nasty or sinister, but a lot of what I do is partly about the potential for it to be sinister, and, but yeah, what is interesting is, that it doesn't come across like that in an overt way. And I mean that's what strangers do and you know there's a lot of creepy dimensions. The whole idea of living with someone else's space in the form of a carpet, is weird. You know, the idea of getting somebody to, ah, you know, live with an intimate towel or an object from somebody else, from across the other side of the world is kind of weird, kind of creepy.

When I asked Vella if he felt the *PlaceMats* project was successful, he replied that he felt it was. Later he raised the issue of ego, which he believed was an important aspect of acknowledgment. He said he was very happy with the outcome of the *PlaceMats* project, noting that he enabled fifty individual students to become artists during its duration. Vella felt that if he had less of an ego then he could have given up ownership of the work. However, he said that the work was still his because it was based on his initial idea, which is in juxtaposition to the view that the VTW held. Vella claimed that the actual art existed in two places. He further explained this as,

the actual decision required in taking each photograph, and the creation of the carpet pieces. Vella also included each school with their postcode and suburb, and ensured that each student was listed in the catalogue in alphabetical order. Every time *PlaceMats* has been exhibited, all of this information has been documented with it. I asked Vella if this aspect of acknowledgment was important to him, and he replied it was extremely important. In terms of acknowledgement, Vella felt that it depended on the context and the role that participants played in the project. He stated that: 'I thought with this project given the role they played in it, it was very important to list them, um particularly because they were kids and it would have meant something to them as well.' During the interview Vella referred to the catalogue to see how he had listed himself. The catalogue had his name on the back and an acknowledgement that he created and coordinated the project.

Phenomenological Essence

The artists in the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition described collaboration from their own experiences, which included artists working with other artists, and artists working with themselves and with formal and informal groups. Their perception of collaboration was necessarily, filtered by these interactions. The artists who worked within a partnership such as the Turpin Crawford Studio and *S/X* had similar training backgrounds and aesthetic. They described their collaboration as: joyous, fun-filled, passionate, complementary and challenging. These artists also described themselves as having the same kind of passion, levels of energy, commitment and standards. Having said this, the interaction between them was exciting and challenging, not passive. Ideas were rigorously debated and viewed from every angle, and the artists in these partnerships described this editing process as happening quite quickly. They felt this was due to their artistic background and knowledge, in addition to the extensive time they have been together. These partnership artists spend a great deal of social time together, and during these times were inspired with new ideas for their work. The artists also supported each other both privately and publicly.

The partnership artists, *S/X* and Turpin and Crawford, described the core of the collaborative process as the initial idea phase. An open and trusting environment encouraged each artist to be generous in sharing their ideas. Even though the artists took on other roles and responsibilities during the project, they always came back

together to record what they had done and to make connections with each other. When required they utilised specialists in their work, and acknowledged that the collaborative process could become complicated by the needs of other people. In fact, the artists described, the work as becoming the ‘third person’ and more important than either artist. A long and established history of collaboration enhanced each project, as it helped the artists to understand what works most successfully in the collaborative process. The artists said that the type of collaboration they were engaged in was rare and often difficult to achieve and required the ability to prioritise and to be generous-spirited. Commitment to their shared vision resulted in signature work, which was not affected by passing trends. The artists insisted on presenting their work jointly, both in terms of documentation and public presentations.

Artists such as John Vella and Geoffrey Ricardo, who work with formal and informal groups, emphasised the need to speak a common language with the participants. They also stressed the importance of enabling the participants to feel a sense of ownership with the project. In these situations the artist choreographs a situation to a certain extent, usually by providing the initial design concept, and allowing a degree of flexibility within this context. Vella felt that the collaborative process dissolved divisions and hierarchies between people, their work and/or place. He also noted that there was a difference between working with artists and non-artists. Vella believed that artists working collaboratively require equal input into the initial design stage, and if this did not occur then they felt a loss of ownership. Vella felt that non-artists preferred to see themselves physically manifested in the work. He noted that a collaborative leader could not be too sensitive or inclusive; otherwise the project became an exercise in making people happy rather than making good work. Vella and Ricardo said that working collaboratively required both tact and the ability to encourage a group. The surrendering of control was both beneficial and frightening. Vella revealed that the sharing of his practice was seen as one means for breaking down the exclusivity of art and encouraging participants to engage with it. These types of collaborations were usually logistically more complex, costly and generated levels of stress. Working with other artists in a formalised group required trust in their expertise. This type of collaborative process cannot work if the image or idea was controlled every step of the way; otherwise the process would be dominated by one person. The ability to undertake larger scale and more ambitious projects; to have

greater physical output and the validation from other people, who wanted to work with you, were all described as important benefits of the collaborative process.

From a curatorial perspective, the artists swiftly moved through the forming, norming and performing stages, without an identified storming stage. From the email correspondence, it was evident that the artists were keen to participate in the exhibition, and were enthusiastic and passionate about informing the public of their collaborative processes and practices. Each group of artists was committed to their work, and were able to eloquently express their views on the complexity of collaboration. The artists were respectful of my curatorial role and involved me in their consideration of the work to be exhibited. The collaborative aspect was emphasised as the performing stage of the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition was reached. As Gallery Director, Bywaters had organised the gallery volunteers and the installation of the exhibition went smoothly, and was also an enjoyable and aesthetic experience. It was unfortunate that three of the artists were interstate and were unable to install their work. However, they maintained contact during the installation week and were available if we needed to discuss anything. The comments from the volunteers and Bywaters about the quality of the work were uplifting. I realised from this experience that collaboration can occur on many levels, and there are many groups that work towards the creation of a third entity. Undertaking this curatorial project helped to impress on me the importance of a number of essential aspects which would need to be integrated into a model of collaborative practice.

Conclusion

The *Partnership or Perish?* case study examined collaboration as it occurred in the artists' practice and through the stages of forming, storming, norming and performing which culminated in the exhibition. The collaborative process engaged in by the artists was predominately based on a long term relationship in the case of the Turpin Crawford Studio, S/X, and the VTW with Geoffrey Ricardo. These groups epitomised the characteristics of trust, open communication, and the submersion of the artist's ego, which appeared to be typical of effective and long standing collaborative partners or groups. In collaboration, the emotional and financial risks were also shared, as are any rewards or accolades that come from engaging in this process. Vella appeared to have utilised some important aspects of the collaborative process, even though he

worked with people on a shorter term basis. The possibility for establishing the type of relationship experienced by the Turpin Crawford Studio and *S!X* in this case study appeared to be more difficult to achieve.

The email responses relevant to this case study provided an overview of the correspondence established with each artist, the gallery director and the curator. The frequency of emails and the change in language from formal to casual indicated the development of these relationships. As the curator I was involved in decisions regarding the selection of work and presentation, both with the artists and the gallery director. During these times, it felt that we were engaging in the performing stage of the group process. The relationships between the artists involved in the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition, encapsulated the key characteristics of an effective collaborative process. The opportunity to be engaged in such a process, which relied on collaboration between the gallery director, the artists and I, allowed me to experience some of the key characteristics of the collaborative process. These included the importance of mutual respect, trust and understanding; leadership; skills and expertise flexibility and compromise; and open, constant and challenging communication.

Chapter 8: Results and Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study are presented in this chapter. Seven questions were asked of the participants in order to respond to the three research questions. The responses were then coded using QSR N6 software. The pie chart below visually represents the nodes used to categorise the data, and their relative proportion to one another. A summary of the responses to the nineteen documents, consisting of interviews and email correspondence, are included in this chapter and findings were compared to literature in chapters two and three. The interview transcripts are contained in Volume 2 Appendix 1C, and the email correspondence is located in Volume 3 Appendix 2C. The nodes used to categorise the data and their percentage return in the retrieved documents were: Leadership (7.5%); Communication (7%); Working Processes (6.1%); Skills & Expertise (5.9%); Support (5.2%); Characteristics of Collaboration (4.7%); Collaboration (4.7%); Responsibility (3.4%); Gender (3.4%); Interpretation (3.4%); Background (3.3%); Identity (3.3%); Performing (2.9%); Norming (2.5%); Motivation to Engage in Collaboration (2.2%); Forming (2.2%); Participants (2%); Personality (2%); Prior Relationship (1.9%); Audience (1.9%); Philosophy (1.9%); Enigmatic Nature of Collaboration (1.8%); Ego (1.3%); Third Entity (1.3%); Social Time (1.2%); Inspiration (1%) and Storming (.37%).

The pie chart in Figure 6 visually represents each of the nodes described above. The node categories were used to code the data according to each participant's reference to, in either the interview or through the email correspondence, of the issue being discussed. The extract of that specific piece of information was coded at the relevant node using the QSR N6 software. For example, the extract below was coded at the node Social Time:

LE: And the other thing that we did, that was, that gave us a great deal of gratification, because we'd worked for so long, um, and um, it was really such a special time for us and different, as the crews changed over, they'd bring afternoon tea, lovely afternoon teas, so at my suggestion, I suggested we gather our recipes together and we produced this recipe book called "Afternoon tea with the PHE" (CSPHE).

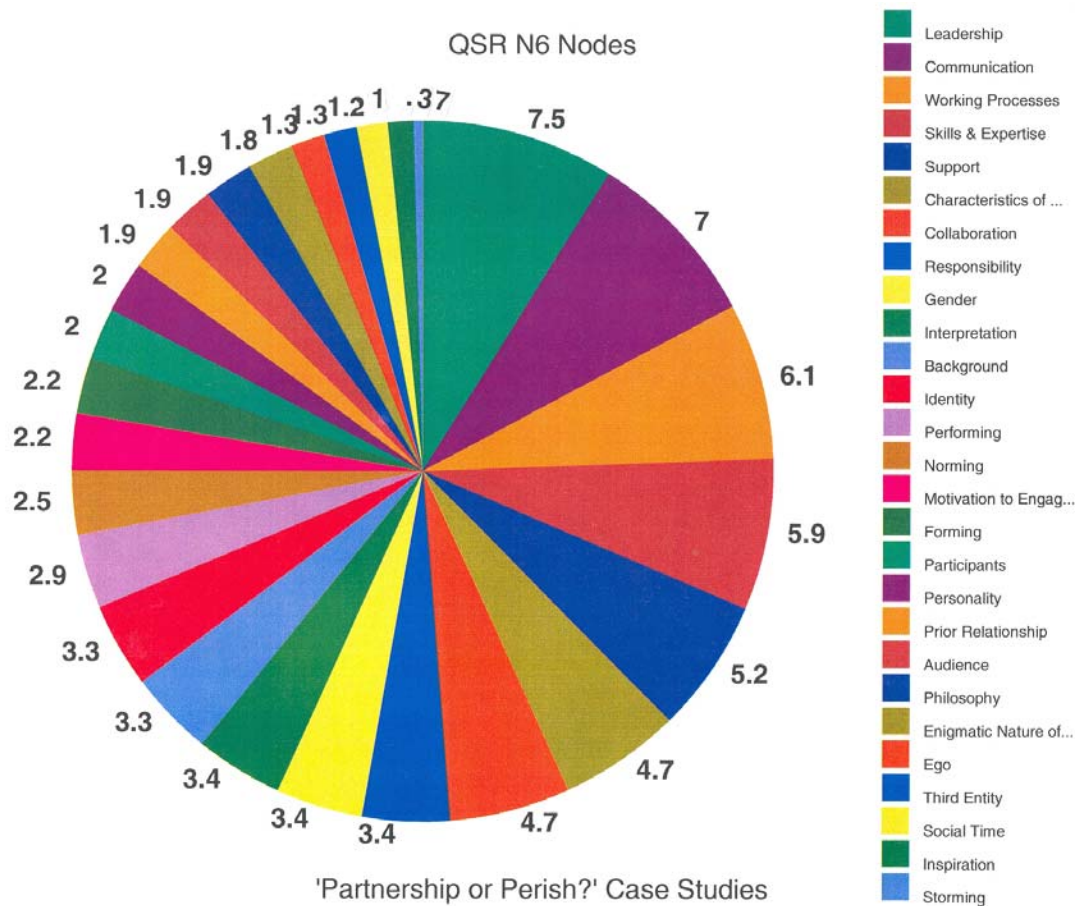


Figure 6: QSR N6 Nodes used to code data from interviews and email correspondence

A breakdown of each node percentage as it applied to individual case studies is located in Appendix 1F. The pie chart was utilised because some of the nodes were found in only some of the documents, not all. Therefore, a proportional representation was chosen to indicate which nodes were more predominant throughout the case studies. In this chapter the following codes: CSPHE (Case Study: Parliament House Embroidery); CSVTW (Case Study: Victorian Tapestry Workshop) and CSPOP (Curatorial Case Study: *Partnership or Perish?*) exhibition were used to differentiate between the case studies. In the discussion that follows findings were considered strongest when participants in the three case studies gave similar responses, or when similar patterns emerged.

Research Question: Why do people engage in collaborative practice?

There were numerous reasons cited for engaging in collaboration, both in the literature review, and by the participants themselves. All of the participants

recognised the value of ‘social time’ between themselves in the collaborative group, as well as away from it. The node Social Time revealed a 1.2% return; however, the union function was used to join it to the node Motivation to Engage in Collaboration (2.2%) resulting in a return of 3.3%. This revealed that some participants had joined the collaborative group because of the social aspect involved.¹ In the case studies and literature review, collaboration appeared to be more successful when the participants felt a sense of belonging to the group. In addition to characteristics such as mutual respect and trust, participants also required a sense of belonging to a collaborative group. The node Identity (3.3%) revealed that it was important for some participants to identify with a group which met regularly, and provided social interaction in a welcoming environment. When the nodes Collaboration, Social Time and Identity were overlapped they revealed an 8.7% return. Mattessich et al., (2004) noted that setting aside purely social time for participants in a collaboration reinforced communication links throughout the group (p. 24).² Although social time away from a group could provide a forum for negative attitudes for some participants, Padgett et al., (1993) stated that friendship and trust can insulate collaboration ‘from the potentially destructive strains of competition and jealousy that frequently plague such projects’ (p. 75).

Tajfel and Turner (1979) revealed that social group identity is important to a person’s sense of belonging to certain social groups. If an individual member of a group strongly identifies with that group, then the individual’s social sense of belonging helps to facilitate communication, trust and innovation (Tushman, 1982). The study’s participants noted that the social aspect was important to their reason for joining the group and remaining within it: ‘It’s not just the skill. There is the relationship of human beings, from all walks of life, from all parts of Australia. That in itself is a wonderful concept’ (CSPHE). Moran and John-Steiner (2004) revealed that this sense of group identity in collaboration was very important to the individuals and its loss can be palpable:

¹ Wenger (2002) similarly described a group of people who had come together with similar issues and needs as a community of practice.

² The ACT guild gathered their afternoon tea recipes together and produced a recipe book titled ‘Afternoon Tea with the PHE.’

When the collaboration breaks up, the shared identity is lost; collaborators grieve for the loss of part of their larger selves. People from marginal groups – such as women, people of colour, and immigrants – are much more likely than people in the dominant culture to recognise this larger-than-self identity as supportive of growth and creative success (p. 15).

However, in shorter term collaborations such as Vella's, the maintaining of relationships beyond the collaboration was felt to be 'a bit superficial' (CSPOP). This time limitation however, appeared to contradict Mattessich et al.'s (2004) finding that: 'A collaborative process should not be rushed. Solid relationships take time to develop' (p. 27). In these short focus cases, it appeared that the product or final outcome outweighed the process of the collaboration. Projects with a limited or very specific time frame can neglect the importance of discussing shared objectives, and particularly people's roles and responsibilities within the collaboration. However, if a Prior Relationship (1.9%) had already been established between the participants and/or the leader, the relationship appeared to expedite the collaborative process. The union of the nodes Prior Relationship and Collaboration resulted in a 6.5% return which also appeared to support this proposition. The PHE participants noted that if there is a prior relationship 'you've got some understanding of where the other is coming from' (CSPHE). Gardner (2006) revealed that if a collaborative group consisted of sound individual relationships and networks, these can often foster the process if institutional support was lacking. An example of this was illustrated by the ingenious ways many of the embroidery guilds found to raise funds to purchase their own materials, to build the frames for their section of the embroidery, and to construct a crate to send their section to the ACT. One of the PHE participants recalled: 'I went to the Arts Minister, and I said "Help! I need to get this to the eastern states, but there's no money"' because we were paying for it ourselves. And he was wonderful. He got onto the art gallery and said "Well you're known there" and he sent them, two men down to my studio, and they came down, and they actually built a crate' (CSPHE). Even without full institutional support, the supportive communication network developed by Lawrence between herself and the embroiderers allowed the collaboration to be successful.

Most of the participants, and particularly the leaders, revealed that collaborative practice was the most efficient way to complete large scale projects. Some collaborative texts (White & O'Brien, 1999; Winer & Ray, 2000) described the increased amount of time it took to engage in a collaborative process. However, these texts referred to the very early stages of a new collaborative group, when relationships had not been fully established. The scale and complexity of the PHE belied the period of time it took to create it. The average time taken by the guilds appeared to be around eighteen months; however the need to acclimatise and join the sections of the embroidery took at least another six months. There was also a great deal of preparation and discussion, including the sample stage, before actual stitching on the panels could begin. Mattessich et al., (2004) stated that: 'Experienced collaborative groups may be better prepared than newly established groups to handle the complexities of large-scale ventures' (p. 22). The existence of the various state and territory guilds, before the project commenced, would certainly have helped with the PHE's successful completion. This also appeared to be the case with the prior relationships and experiences that existed with Geoffrey Ricardo, the VTW, and the Turpin Crawford Studio.

The issue of ego was one which appeared to be subverted by the opportunity for participants, and particularly artists, to extend and interrogate their practice. The artist Gregory Amenoff agreed with the importance of this by describing collaboration 'as a chance to stretch my ideas and artistic identity, not simply to force my established identity into another realm' (Padgett et al., 1993, p. 77). This beneficial result of collaboration was also confirmed by choreographer Murray Lewis. He revealed in *Creative Collaboration* (John-Steiner, 2000) that two different artistic styles when observed, carefully and with due respect, can provide a revealing mirror for each partner: 'These mirrors add a third dimension, a deeper view, to their knowledge of themselves. They enrich the partners' options in solo and joint work' (p. 63). John-Steiner (2000) stated that although collaboration had traditionally been considered in terms of work, 'it also provides many personal benefits' (p. 75), such as emotional support.

Ricardo's collaboration with the VTW demonstrated that it was possible to work successfully across disciplines to achieve a shared aesthetic and result that neither

party could have achieved individually. However, it was interesting to note that the weavers' initials were woven onto the bottom hem of the tapestry which is always turned under, unlike an artist who traditionally signs their name on the front of their work. However, the VTW logo is woven on the front. This indicated that although the weavers' identities are subsumed under the VTW logo, they still endeavour to be acknowledged individually. Ricardo also revealed that the weavers wanted the very best outcome for the work, which also confirmed their mutual stake in both process and outcome (Mattessich et al., 2004, p. 9). He concluded by stating that the collaborative process with the VTW had affected his work, and subconsciously was still doing so. Through facing the challenges of the PHE together, Lawrence felt that both the embroiderers and she had learnt a lot from each other. John-Steiner (2000) described this as one of the interesting paradoxes of collaboration: 'Each participant's individual capacities are deepened at the same time that participants discover the benefits of reciprocity' (p. 204).

Lawrence revealed that in Australia nobody had previously attempted to complete embroidery of such a large scale, and it was, therefore, a very risky venture in that respect. Mattessich et al., (2004) described the notion of a unique purpose driven by a need, crisis or opportunity, as being an important reason to collaborate (p. 10). In the case of the PHE it was a remarkable opportunity to be involved in an art program/product, which integrated art into a building imbued with democratic purpose. Pamille Berg (1988) stated:

Critical to our thinking was both an emphasis upon the richness and diversity of point of view of individuals in a democracy, and the fact that a democracy is strong only when decision and purpose are fused together, from that diversity of opinion, supported upon democracy's broad base ... the building should imply the directness of the social contract or mutual pact which we have all made implicitly by living in a democratic society: the giving-up of our individual free will in order to pool those rights equally with all others (p. 2).

Although collaboration should be an experience that benefits both parties, it could also be described as self-interest. In these situations, participants believe 'they will

benefit from their involvement in the collaboration, and the advantages of membership will offset costs such as loss of autonomy and turf' (Mattessich et al., 2004, p. 8). Ricardo referred to *The Bairnsdale Tapestry* as belonging to both the weavers and himself: 'You know, it's mine – but it's also their's.' However, his signature was woven on the front, whilst the weavers' identities are consolidated under the VTW logo. This statement revealed that he had seemingly relinquished sole ownership, and understood that the work now had joint authorship. One of the other CSPOP artists commented that if a project required collaboration, then he would use it. For this artist expediency appeared to be the primary aim of the collaborative process. The collaborative process, as an important form of communication between participants appeared to be a secondary importance. Another artist described collaboration as a function, and the most efficient means of expression for an idea which could not be articulated or realised on an individual basis. As young, white, male contemporary artists, it was revealing that their responses were concerned with efficiency and function, although both acknowledged the positive benefits of collaboration. Montuori and Purser (1995) argued that creativity required a social context to exist within, and therefore, the creative impulse may be 'motivated by a desire for integration, connection and communication with one's community and others' [Emphasis in original] (p. 75). Montuori and Purser cited an example of interviews, conducted by Barron (1972) in which male artists said they would not continue their work if they did not receive recognition. The conclusion they drew was 'recognition played a vital but not fully recognised role for them' (p. 75).

The issue of acknowledgment appeared to be an important aspect for one of these artists. He emailed the gallery to see if other members, from the field of art, had viewed his work in *Partnership or Perish?* as he hoped his work could be featured in 'a quality public collection.' John-Steiner (2000) noted that the playwright Bertold Brecht was ideologically committed to collaboration, yet also 'hungered for personal recognition' (p. 64). In hindsight, it could be argued that Brecht's individual ego fuelled some of his work, which also appeared to be a similar scenario for some of the participants in CSPOP. Mockros & Csikszentmihalyi (1999) proposed that men's identity was related to their socialisation, and as a result 'competition and independence may have [a] more favourable effect on men's identity development

than women's (p. 184). These attributes can be contrasted with the VTW weaver John Dicks, for whom issues of acknowledgment did not appear to be of primary concern.

The voluntary nature of collaboration also appeared to be an underlying reason as to why people engage in collaborative practice. Friend and Cook (2003) argued that the voluntary nature of collaboration was one of its defining characteristics: 'Only the individuals involved can decide if a collaborative style will be used in their interactions ... there is no such thing as collaboration by coercion!' (p. 6). Some of the participants noted that women volunteer more often than men (Social Time 1.2%; Motivation to Engage in Collaboration 2.2%; Gender 3.4%). 'Women are great organisers; women are more likely than men to give freely of their time' (CSPHE). Onyx and Leonard (2000) found that women do volunteer more than men, and the current decrease in volunteering within Australia was due 'to the loss of middle-aged women who have always been the mainstay of volunteer work' (p. 121). They also noted that women have traditionally played an important networking role in the community. Evans also raised the issues of women undertaking a great deal of voluntary work, such as in the PHE, and was glad that this work had been acknowledged.³ In describing her own situation at the time she said that she, like all of the women involved, had many other commitments with part-time work and families (Responsibility 3.4%). The majority of embroiderers did describe their work on the PHE as the highlight of their lives and were sad to see it end. Thompson stated emphatically: 'Once a week. I knew what I was doing once a week for a whole year. I knew what I was doing ... each week.' The fact that the embroiderers were all women who had families and jobs, yet made the commitment to embroider on a regular basis, resulted in a shared sense of purpose and group identity. John-Steiner (2000) noted that 'when combining family life and creative work, couples face the challenge of overcoming traditional gender roles' (p. 7). Although John-Steiner was referring to couples working collaboratively, the same statement could be applied to people with partners working in creative sectors. This proposition was supported by Bardez and Throsby (1997) whose research report, into the lives of visual artists and craftspeople,

³ Rabinovitz (1980 - 81) noted this way of working exploited the women, particularly when they were working in a voluntary capacity. If a woman also happened to be in a leadership role, then she ultimately reinforced the authority figure role, emulating societal and art school practices that feminists have fought against. This way of working with assistants also succeeded in contributing to the myth of the patriarchal artist, which has 'traditionally undermined the bulk of women's artistic output' (p. 39).

found that the three most prominent factors inhibiting career development were poor financial returns for artistic work, the need to earn an income elsewhere and domestic responsibilities (p. 12).

Another aspect of volunteerism considered was that standards can vary, and if participants do not wish to be involved, then they can leave at any time. Vella noted this as an aspect he has had to consider in his community collaborative projects. Large collaborative projects quite often relied on volunteers⁴ who supported the ethos of the project or group.⁵ From both the case studies and literature review it was shown that collaborative efforts were more successful, when there had been a history of collaboration within the group. If a group was voluntary then it would appear that they have already formed important connections, and had personal motivation for being in that group. In some ways it could be considered to be like a family, in which people were accepted without question, however, this notion could also be applied to the standard of their work. Some of the section leaders in CSPHE admitted to undoing some of the embroidery stitches and redoing them, because they did not want to hurt the participants' feelings: 'I felt perhaps it wasn't right ...so I would just redo that little area, and they noticed. I didn't think they would, but they noticed' (CSPHE). These actions do not acknowledge the importance of parity amongst participants in a collaboration, where 'each person's contribution to an interaction is equally valued, and each person has equal power in decision making' (Friend & Cook, 2003, p. 7).

Other participants sought out large groups to work within for their sense of security and also companionship. This was particularly evidenced in CSVTW where the weavers were allowed to continue uninterrupted with their work. However, Mattessich et al. (2004) argued that if long-term collaborative groups do not remain open to flexibility, they 'solidify their norms in ways that constrain their thinking and behaviour' (p. 20). Bardez and Throsby (1997) noted in their research that 'craftspeople and visual artists, are likely to spend their time at more than one avenue of work' (p. 15), due to the lack of opportunities for full time work in the arts sector.⁶

⁴ Artists who have used volunteers in large-scale collaborative projects include Christo and Judy Chicago.

⁵ This often occurs in venues such as art galleries which often rely on volunteer guides.

⁶ The figures indicated that 59% of Craftspeople and 50% of Visual Artists were able to spend this amount of time on their principal artistic occupation.

Anecdotal conversations at the VTW revealed that this sense of security was an important factor in working there. Collaboration also provides support and confidence for the participants. Moran and John-Steiner noted that ‘Collaboration can provide a kind of ‘insurance policy’ against quitting, as it smooths the ups and downs of the creative process’ (p. 17). Although collaborators’ identities remain distinct over the course of the collaboration, they can take the lead at various stages. John-Steiner (2000) also noted that ‘partners can take over for each other in reaching out to the world, or in providing hope and support within a collaboration’ (p. 126). Having said this, collaborators must continually challenge each other and interrogate their practice to ensure the result of their work, known as the third entity, is true to their shared vision and reflects their passion and intensity:

We are all familiar with that desire to find a soul mate. When you collaborate, you can sometimes feel you have found one. You can reinforce each other’s faults and mistake each other for God. You can produce this child with someone and be blind to its faults (Baechtl, 2005, p. 2).

The table below provides a brief summary of the participants’ responses to the advantages they perceived to be in working collaboratively.

Case Studies	Advantages to Working Collaboratively
CSPHE	Having access to skills that you do not have; having input into the decision-making process; being able to see what was appropriate through observation; fulfilling a sense of purpose; process seemed to be quicker; there was a supportive atmosphere; time to learn about people you were working with; having a range of expertise to draw on; being an active part of something that was on permanent display; learning how to co-operate; emotional satisfaction; friendship/companionship; regular meeting time; and establishing a group identity.
CSVTW	Valuing of input from both artist and weaver; unique perspective from both artist and weaver; limitation to choices and more efficient use of time; clear understanding of roles and expectations; trust in the process; social aspect; reputation; clear communication; mutual respect; and establishing a shared vision.
CSPOP	Unified vision; being able to share the qualities of trust, generosity, openness, energy and strength; communication was quicker; ability to share arts practice with a large number of people; breaking down hierarchical barriers; rewarding to become part of people’s lives; collaborative projects could facilitate opportunities for funding or sponsorship; friendship; scale of work can increase; work more efficiently; projects can become more ambitious; there is validation when working with someone else; and seeing your work through another person’s eyes.

Table 15: Advantages to working collaboratively from the *Partnership or Perish?* case studies

In summation, a number of reasons were given, during the interviews, as to why the participants engaged in collaborative practice. These ranged from emotional needs through to more practical responses, such as collaboration allowed more ambitious projects to occur and were more likely to attract funding. The reasons why people engage in collaborative practice appear to relate both to support, and to the ability to extend their skills and expertise through working with other people. Given the complexity of the collaborative process, it has evidently not been a practice engaged in for purely economic benefit. In describing collaboration John-Steiner (2000) noted: ‘... managing the relationship is complex. In some ways, [it is] similar to relationships in biological families. Both can involve loyalty, mutual caring, conflict, separations, and the subsequent development of new connections (p. 164). The participants engaged in the collaborative process for a variety of reasons, however as May (1995) noted collegiality, cooperation and collaboration are ‘complex sociopolitical arrangements, no matter who is involved or how and why such relations are initiated or encouraged’ (p. 67). Many people have engaged in collaborative practice for the reasons cited in this section; however without understanding its complexity the resulting process and outcome will not be mutually beneficial for the participants.

Research Question: What are the key factors inherent in sustaining a successful collaborative practice?

The responses from all three case studies and email correspondence indicated that the two key factors inherent in sustaining a successful collaborative practice were Leadership (7.5%) and Communication (7%). The literature review indicated that texts which focussed on collaboration and the arts, routinely neglected leadership as a key factor in collaborative practice (Close, 2004; Green, 2001; John-Steiner, 2000; McCabe, 1984). The exception to this was Farrell’s (2001) *Collaborative Circles*, which described three forms of leadership, the gatekeeper, the charismatic leader, and the executive manager. Each of these forms of leadership gradually increased in levels of organisation and authority. This finding correlated with the case studies and email correspondence and revealed that leadership within a collaborative venture can be both non-hierarchical, yet authoritative. *Collaborating Across the Sectors* (Gardner et al., 2006), includes the arts sector as part of its research. The authors found that high

quality leadership was an important incentive to participants, and ‘a project with leadership opportunities for many people provides incentives for members to contribute more fully’ (p. 36). As Metcalfe et al. (2006) noted, collaboration demands an innovative leadership style. Effective leaders are aware of, and work with, the unique characteristics of the participants and the social/cultural environment the collaboration exists within. However as Mattessich et al. (2004) stated, ‘the many decisions within a collaborative effort cannot possibly fit the preferences of every member perfectly’ (p. 8). Although individuals may be responsible for initiating and nurturing collaboration ‘there is a lot more going on’ (Gardner et al., 2006, p. 60).

The arts have traditionally eschewed various forms of authority, whilst maintaining freedom of expression. This approach appears to have affected, and possibly dissuaded, artists from engaging in collaborative ventures. The artists may be philosophically opposed to being identified as a leader, or engaging in a process with a hierarchical structure.⁷ The changing role of the artist, described in the literature review, noted that social and cultural issues have created a complex layering of binary oppositions, which create varying degrees of tension.⁸ A systems theory of creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1995; Weisberg, 1993) proposed that the social system, culture and person, operates in a cyclical or non-hierarchical manner. In the art world this social system can be identified as the field (society), domain (art world) and individual (artist). However, there are hierarchies which operate within a systems theory of creativity. The field, domain and individual are all comprised of people who have varying degrees of power and influence.⁹

The coded results from the QSR N6 software established that some form of leadership was vital to both artistic partnerships and group collaborations. The literature review revealed that the traditional perception of leadership, as the sole provenance of one person, was changing to a collective form of leadership (Acker, 1990; Adler, 1993; Buzzanell, 1994, 2000; Coughlin et al., 2005; Hargrove, 1998; Henry, 1996; Kline, 1993; Manning & Haddock, 1989; Montuori & Purser, 1995, 1999b, 1999c, Mumby, 1996; Purser & Montuori, 1999; Rosener, 1990). There were many variations of

⁷ The philosophical opposition described could be attributed to the guild workshops and subsequent separation of the artist and artisan.

⁸ These include, but are not limited to art/craft; person/group; artist/artisan and male/female.

⁹ For example, art critics can advance or hinder an artist’s career.

leadership, which were often more facilitative than hierarchical.¹⁰ Within this facilitative leadership style, control moved away from the leader to the group, and was often linked to the norming and performing stages of the group's formation. In addition, leadership was seen to be distributed amongst other people nominated as leaders, particularly in large groups such as CSPHE and CSVTW.

Leadership texts (Barrentine, 1993; Buzzanell, 2000; Henry, 1996; Rickards & De Cock, 1999; Gerger, 2005; Eisler, 2005) revealed that organisations were increasingly incorporating a more devolved form of leadership, which relied on horizontal and diagonal forms of both formal and informal communication, as opposed to the traditional vertical form. The case studies also confirmed that both formal and informal modes of communication were essential for effective collaborations. As Straus (2002) noted 'there are many levels of involvement between making a decision unilaterally and delegating it to an individual or group below you' (p. 148).

The notion of traditional, hierarchical leadership has been deeply ingrained, and it became apparent, during the study, that some participants preferred this authoritarian style, and 'being told what to do' (CSPHE). This preference was linked to information coded at: Responsibility (3.4%); Gender (3.4%); Identity (3.3%) and Personality (2%). When these nodes were overlapped with Leadership they resulted in a 4% result across all documents. This finding indicated that participants brought many intrinsic traits with them, which affected, and were affected, by the leadership style used in the collaboration. The combination of Responsibility, Gender, Identity, Personality, and Leadership with Communication resulted in a 3.5% return across all documents. The variation within each of these nodes across the three case studies varied, yet, as Schenider and Northcraft (1999) revealed, the communication style utilised by a leader, effectively contributed to the acceptance of participants' diversity. This observation appeared to correlate with the high return for both leadership and communication as key factors in the collaborative process.

There were several factors which affected the type of leadership evident in sustained and successful collaborative practices, with the most predominant being communication. Clear, constant and challenging communication was a consistent

¹⁰ Facilitative leadership has also been described as collaborative, relational or post-industrial leadership (Bryner and Markova, 1996; Hargrove, 1998; Rost, 1991).

factor throughout the case studies and literature review (Bennis & Biderman, 1997; Farrell, 2001; John-Steiner, 2000; Mattessich, 2004; White & O'Brien, Winer & Ray, 2000). From the findings, it was interesting to note that leadership was rated, by the participants, slightly higher than communication. However, this finding appeared reasonable given that participants in a successful collaborative venture have highly developed communication skills, but without leadership skills they may be unable to progress towards their goals. Gardner et al., (2006) noted that leadership approach and style were major factors affecting organisational culture and climate. 'An inspiring leader whom members do not want to disappoint can be a big incentive for involvement. Such a leader can provide dispassionate criticism, important for moving the collaboration forward, and can also keep the collaboration on track' (p. 60). As with leadership, the type of communication employed in the collaboration varied. The description of communication included the need to discuss issues openly and to convey all necessary information to one another, and the group as a whole. This factor was also supported by texts which specifically focussed on the collaborative process (Farrell, 2001; John-Steiner, 2000; Mattessich, et al., 2004; Straus, 2002; Winer & Ray, 1994).

A deviation from this finding occurred with the CSVTW case study. The weavers revealed that they limited the number of samples interpreted from an art work, because they perceived the artist would be overwhelmed by numerous choices. Selective, and at times, limited communication in this case study was reinforced by the following statements: '...each person might be part of the team doing the sample, trying out something different. That's the ideal situation. That doesn't always happen'; '... well we usually have quite a lot of input from the artist, I mean usually, but it's not always the case'; and '...in an act of faith, the artist then moves away and lets the people who have far greater skills in interpreting the work get on with the job.' Gardner et al. (2006) described a lack of communication as indicating deeper level problems within collaborative ventures, including a lack of trust between participants. Haslam (2000) proposed that the omission or filtering of information can lead to simplification of messages and ultimately communication avoidance.

These statements indicated that in some circumstances the artist or member/s of the group were deemed to be superfluous to the process, as the interpretation happened

directly between the weavers and the artwork. Additionally, the artists were chosen by the VTW because of their ‘collaborative spirit,’ meaning they were open and flexible to the concept of their work being transformed into another medium. This approach, however, could also result in the artists allowing the weavers to make the majority of decisions. Some of the artists, as acknowledged by the weavers, have been content to leave the process of interpretation to them, and after the initial meeting, did not see the tapestry again until it was completed. As in CSPHE, the design was already pre-chosen, which negated the formation of the idea between the artist and weaver. The weavers produced a limited number of samples for the artist to decide which interpretation best encapsulated the spirit of the artwork. Timelines and budgets were decided on well in advance, which effectively curtailed the formation stage which, at times, could not evolve naturally with the participants. Collaboration, as manifested in CSVTW, was more closely aligned with a cooperative arrangement.

Another facet of communication, evident in the literature review and case studies, was the importance of speaking a common language which all participants could understand. Lawrence made extensive efforts to understand the complexities of embroidery, so that she could speak in this language with the embroiderers. Her commitment to establishing open and frequent communication with the guilds, earned her respect amongst the CSPHE participants. Vella also commented on the importance of speaking the participants’ language, and it was interesting to note that both responses referred to groups drawn from the community.

Even though participants engaged in a collaborative process submerge their egos, issues of identity negotiation¹¹ were apparent in some of the weaver’s statements. These seemed to be directly related to the fact that some people had assumed the weavers were merely copying artworks. The nodes Identity (3.3%) and Ego (1.3%) related to issues of acknowledgment across all three case studies. The literature review revealed that participants in collaborative ventures were encouraged to establish a group identity, with the work, or third entity, taking precedence over individual achievement and acknowledgment (Bennis & Biederman, 1997; Farrell, 2001; Gardner, 2006; Green, 2001; John-Steiner, 2000; Padgett, et al., 1993). An

¹¹ Identity negotiation is described as a crisis which can revolve around too much agency (expressing oneself) and communality (appropriating from others), Moran & John-Steiner, (2004), p. 20.

overlap of Leadership and Ego resulted in 1.4%, revealing that leadership was not primarily motivated by individual achievement. From the responses, it appeared that the right type of leader would be able to ‘walk a tightrope of tensions, address[ing] the needs of their members, and the wider stakeholders in the collaboration, be[ing] active members of their collaborative teams, and tackle[ing] the more entrepreneurial demands of their role’ (Gardner et al., 2006, p. 65). Importantly, the literature review and findings revealed that a collaborative leader would not prioritise their individual needs over that of the group.

As revealed in the CSVTW case study there were circumstances often beyond the VTW’s control, which can affect the collaborative process.¹² The VTW has a well deserved reputation for producing internationally renowned tapestries on time, and on budget. The marketability of the VTW’s tapestries, therefore ‘can become an inherent part (and sometimes destructive element) of the artistic process’ (Mockros and Csikszentmihalyi, 1999, p. 208). The VTW ostensibly works with contemporary artists with an emerging or well established reputation in the art world. Both the artist and the VTW rely on one another’s reputation and skills for this arrangement to be successful. Although the tapestry has become an art work in its own right, the naming of the artist on documentation could be seen to detract from the weavers’ contribution. Alternatively, using another artist’s work to base the tapestry on could be misconstrued as the weavers lacking originality and initiative. The interpretive decisions for a tapestry must be made at the beginning. Additionally, the artist is usually not often on-site, due to the laborious and time-intensive nature of tapestry weaving. Periodic visits, even with the best intentions, do not substitute for the constant and challenging communication featured in collaboration (Gardner, 2006; Mattesich, et al., 2004; Winer & Ray, 2001).

Recent leadership texts, predominately written by women, proposed that feminine attributes such as support, care and nurturing were being increasingly incorporated into organisational leadership structures. An overlap of the nodes Leadership and Gender revealed that it only occurred within .07% of the responses. However this could be attributed to participants’ understanding of the traditional view of leadership,

¹² For example, the death of artist Roger Kemp, which occurred before the suite of four tapestries was finished for the National Gallery of Victoria.

as opposed to the more devolved style evident in recent leadership texts. The finding could also suggest that there is a greater awareness of gender discrimination, particularly when related to issues of leadership. Issues of gender, however, were evident in the interviews and emails (3.4%), even after participants denied that it had contributed to or affected their collaborative practice. This finding suggested that although gender was not a key factor in sustaining a successful collaborative practice, it needed to be considered. For example, Mockros & Csikszentmihalyi (1999) stated that ‘conflict, controversy, and competition may be more abrasive to women’ which can impede the open, honest and frequent communication necessary for collaboration to occur. The responses to the issue of gender were substantially different in each of the case studies due to participants’ age, and social/cultural context.

Skills & Expertise (5.9%) were rated highly by all participants as a key factor in collaborative practice. The standard of skills and expertise was seen to be important to a group’s identity and reputation, particularly when work was placed in the public domain. Gardner (2006) noted that if too much preparation, learning or changed practice is required from participants, then collaboration will become much more difficult (p. 68). Mattessich et al., (2004) stated that successful collaborations need to provide appropriate structure, resources and activities ‘to meet the needs of the group without overwhelming its capacity’ (p. 9). They also recommended that leaders should consider participants ‘true interests and strengths when making assignments’ (p. 20). In CSPHE there was an initial lack of training regarding interpretation of art work.¹³ As the embroiderers had traditionally worked from prepared designs, many of them felt ill-prepared to translate Lawrence’s artwork. Constant and constructive communication and feedback from Lawrence, and the section leaders, ensured that the embroiderers were given support and guidance. Visual examples, in the form of samples, were particularly important in this case study, as they immediately revealed the type of technique and colours which were required. The participants were able to increase their knowledge and skills as the collaboration progressed. Their prior skills and expertise in embroidery provided a degree of confidence, which enabled them to see the interpretation of Lawrence’s design as an extension or enhancement of prior

¹³ Lockwood & Glaister (1978) revealed that traditional embroidery books advocated taking nature ‘as a suggestive guide rather than as a pattern for servile copying’ and stated that ‘the subtle gradations which are with difficulty reproduced in painting are quite out of reach in embroidery’¹³ (pp. 25 - 26).

knowledge. In return, Lawrence stated that the inherent qualities of the yarns enlivened the surface giving the embroidery ‘a life and vitality that didn’t exist in the original design’ (Richards, 1987, p. 9).

In contrast, the VTW weavers, and the artists who work with them, were both highly skilled, yet identified differently. The weavers interpret artwork into tapestry and are identified as tapestry weavers.¹⁴ Similarly, the artists were also highly skilled in their particular medium, and were identified as artists. When the nodes Identity and Skills and Experience were joined, they resulted in a 9% return across all documents. This high percentage indicated that participants identified themselves, the group and others in terms of their skills and expertise. This group identity was also a common factor across the three case studies. A number of the embroiderers were aware of Lawrence’s reputation before the PHE commenced. Artists have approached the VTW to work with the weavers, on the basis of its reputation. The POP artists were selected for the exhibition based on their exhibition history and collaborative working arrangements. Hogg and Terry (2000) described how differences in status, power and prestige are major challenges to collaboration. Brien & Bruns (2006) noted that these differences also contributed to issues related to authorship credit the sharing of responsibility and output and institutional and cultural hierarchies (Brien & Bruns, 2006).¹⁵ Within the social system of the art world, artists have traditionally been granted higher status than craft workers. There has also been a distinction made between art and craft work (Binns, 1991; Chadwick, 1996; Parker & Pollock, 1981; Timms, 2004). The case studies revealed that most participants in larger groups preferred to be acknowledged, rather than rendered anonymous within a ‘third identity’. Participants in two of the partnerships elected to utilise a third identity, which merged both their reputations and individual identity. The union of the nodes Third Entity, Identity and Ego revealed a 4% return from all documents. An overlap of the nodes Third Entity and Ego only resulted in a .27% return, revealing that the creation of a ‘third entity’ required participants to submerge their individual egos.

¹⁴ The VTW workshop has come from the tradition of the Gobelins Tapestry Workshop. The leading artists during this time had a substantial influence on tapestry weaving. Prior to this tapestries had become ‘merely woven pictures, exact and lifeless copies of the original’ (Thomson, 1980, p. 134).

¹⁵ In this study these factors can be coded at Identity (3.3%) and Ego (1.3%) to describe Authorship Credit; Responsibility (3.4%) and Output at Performing (2.9%) and Institutional and Cultural Hierarchies can be represented by the nodes Background (3.3%) and Audience (1.9%).

The purpose or reason underlying the collaboration was also an important factor to be considered. Responses related to this issue were coded at the node Responsibility (3.4%). When Motivation to Engage in Collaboration (2.2%) was joined with Responsibility it resulted in a 5.4% return. This appeared to indicate that participants who felt responsibility for a project were more motivated. Mattessich et al., (2004) described the importance of participants sharing a stake in both the process and outcome of the collaboration. The authors revealed that this perception of ownership needed to be constantly monitored, and if required, changes in process or structure would need to be made. CSPHE participants initially proposed the concept of the PHE, and felt a sense of ownership with the project from the beginning. Because the PHE relied on voluntary labour, the embroiderers were not under the same financial pressure which the VTW weavers were. CSVTW participants appeared to be motivated by the importance of upholding the reputation of the VTW through the high standard of their skills and expertise, in addition to finishing projects on time and budget. Although both case studies were regulated by time pressures, one was voluntary and the other was paid. The CSPOP case study revealed that self-interest on behalf of the Academy Gallery, my curatorial role, and the opportunity to exhibit for the artists, was a strong motivational factor.

When the nodes Skills & Expertise were intersected with Leadership they resulted in a 2% rating. This appeared to suggest that leaders did not necessarily require all of the skills and expertise necessary for a successful collaborative enterprise. Participants however, nominated Support (5.2%) from each other and their leader as a key factor for a successful collaboration. This was typified in such responses as: 'I got the phone call back from Kay and Anne, to say how excited they were, to see this development which was different from the others' (CSPHE). The type of support described was also qualified by the social/cultural context of the participants and ranged from: 'the men ... supporting us and putting up with sketchy meals or no meals at all' (CSPHE); to 'She is, his mentor almost on that project, and he learnt a tremendous amount from her. But she also had a great deal of fun working with him (CSVTW); and '... it feels like moral support sometimes, but the reality is you need the knowledge base of both heads' (CSPOP).

Other characteristics pertaining to each case study are detailed in Table 16 and were coded at the node Characteristics of Collaboration (4.7%). These included: rapport; respect; trust; flexibility; shared vision; resources; self-interest; ownership; joy and passion. These were difficult to code at separate nodes as they were often incorporated together, evidenced in the following statements: ‘... for us to have taken part in something permanent in Parliament House, um, twenty years down the track, it still hasn’t lost its sense of wonder, that we were able to take part in it’ (CSPHE); ‘Oh there was great enthusiasm by then. The ladies who presented their work were many of them, very, very skilled embroiderers, and there was this love for creativity that did light a fire in all of us (CSPHE).’ This sense of joy and enthusiasm was also evident in CSPOP: ‘I also think we complement ourselves. I mean there are things we feel the same about, which is a level of passion, level of energy, level of commitment, level of standards ...’ but was understated in CSVTW. This may be the result of the weavers, who are trained primarily as artists, feeling that their own artistic inclinations were thwarted, or at the very least, curtailed by the demands placed on them. One of the weavers revealed that the larger tapestries had to look as if only one person had woven it. This practical necessity, in addition to working from another artist’s design, restricted any avenue for individual artistic expression. This observation appeared to reinforce Wright’s (2004) concern, about the complexity of voluntary and non-voluntary artistic collaborative practice:

Of course, certain forms of collaboration have always characterised artistic activity, both between artists, and, outside the times and spaces validated by art, between artists and people from other walks of life. But because the symbolic economy of recognition that characterises the art world is highly competitive, and based on the strategic exploitation of disparities in talent and social capital, permanent risk management, acceptance of and even insistence upon non-monetary remuneration and so on, sincere attempts at collaboration are easily thwarted (p. 534).

Although the VTW had built a philosophy based on collaboration between the artists and the weavers, the social system it operated in, based on commodity exchange and symbolic recognition for the participants, has stymied its most sincere attempts.

The key factors, inherent in sustaining a successful collaborative practice from the participants in the three case studies, revealed several similarities with the organisational texts. These findings confirmed that the business world has been increasingly transforming the art world towards a business oriented model (Holmes, 2004). Given the context of the collaborative case studies, the findings acknowledged that social and cultural factors have played an important role in the way the collaborative processes occurred. A summary of the factors necessary for sustaining a successful collaborative process derived from the three case studies are summarised in Table 16:

Case Studies	Characteristics of Successful Collaboration
CSPHE	Shared input; clear, regular and consistent communication – both formal and informal; rapport between the participants; mutual respect, understanding and trust; the ability to compromise (flexibility); shared vision; willingness to accept advice; skilled leadership; appropriate structure and resources to enable goals to be reached; a politically and socially favourable climate; understanding of rights and responsibilities; consistent standard of quality maintained; new knowledge and support.
CSVTW	Clear, regular and consistent communication – both formal and informal; feedback; the ability to compromise (flexibility); self-interest; ownership; sufficient staff, funds, materials and time; true interests and strengths considered; mutual respect, and understanding and trust.
CSPOP	Creation of a third identity; longer duration for effective collaboration; constant and challenging communication; agreeing on and speaking the same language; similarity in backgrounds and ideology; the ability to compromise (flexibility); clear, regular, respectful and consistent communication – both formal and informal; mutual respect, understanding and trust; acknowledgment of input; overall responsibility; establishing a framework; allowing participants a sense of control; balancing inequities amongst participants; constant maintenance of the process; passion; submerging of ego; sharing a stake in process and outcome; social time away from collaboration; clearly defined roles; shared aesthetic, efficiency; trust; and agreement on the best outcome for the work.

Table 16: Key characteristics of successful collaboration identified through the case studies

The findings supported the importance of the relational dynamics of collaboration (Farrell, 2001; John-Steiner, 2000). Sustainable and successful collaborations required the following essential elements derived from the longer-term collaborations in this study: a prior relationship to be established; a similar background or ideology; a shared vision and purpose; clearly defined roles and responsibilities; open, clear, regular and challenging communication; flexibility and adaptability; subsuming of ego; trust; passion; intensity; and an acknowledgment that the work becomes the third artist within the collaboration. When all of these elements can be identified participants will ‘take each other’s questions, skills and personal styles very seriously.

They [will] hear their partners' concerns before they are even articulated' (John-Steiner, 2000, p. 196).

Why has collaboration only recently re-emerged as one vehicle for contemporary artistic practice?

Wright (2004) stated that 'collaboration emerges and flourishes under certain sets of circumstances' (p. 533). However, as Mattessich et al. (2004) noted: 'Collaboration is not always effective. It is not always appropriate. Sometimes it might even result in greater costs than independent efforts' (p. 4). Some participants described working collaboratively as creating more work and stress and felt the process was also more costly, needed a great deal of preparation time and was logistically, more complex. This perception has been identified by Rogoff (1990) as 'the difficulty of communicating some ideas or of negotiating mental responsibility,' which may lead some individuals to work alone (p. 144). She noted that some people were concerned about the effort or risk of working collaboratively. The case studies revealed that the participants were aware that collaborative processes were more complex, but it appeared that in most situations, the human dynamics or process of the collaboration was as at least as valued as the final outcome. It was interesting to note, as revealed in the literature review, that the notion of exclusivity has been part of the 'aura' of twentieth century Western artistic practice. However, artists who have engaged in collaborative practice have actively sought to break down this barrier and, ironically, provide themselves with a new 'aura' as leaders of a collaborative group.

One of the participants in the CSPOP case study declared, that collaboration had become more common and popular in contemporary society. The reason for this, he surmised, was contemporary art trying to generate a greater audience, and become more relevant. Arts sectors and departments, particularly those in universities, have increasingly been under pressure to generate funding, hence the newly acquired term 'Creative Industries' to describe them. Timms revealed that aesthetic production has inevitably become integrated into commodity production, resulting in 'the market's pernicious effect [is] to impoverish art's expressive power through its constant demand for conformity to its interests' (p. 52). Timms (2004) also noted that the art market maintains social structures, that link arts activities to those of the rest of the community (p. 51). This perception was also confirmed by Shiner (2001) who stated:

As governments retreat even more from their social responsibilities, the market is taking over as the primary determinant of our lives. So surreptitiously has the market's power crept up on us, and so little resistance has it come up against, that we are hardly aware of its corrosive effect' (p. 41).

The literature review revealed that collaboration emerged as an important asset in organisations because of its links with innovation and creativity. The arts sector, which inherently possesses these qualities, has increasingly been adopting practices which emulate organisations. On the other hand, organisations are looking to creative sectors to develop lateral thinking and innovative approaches. The fostering of communities of practice, which have traditionally developed without institutional support, has been an important indicator of this strategy.

One of the CSPOP participants noted that art appeared to go through cycles where it becomes more community engaged. He felt that projects which involved the community facilitated greater opportunities for funding or sponsorship. The same participant felt that it was also reasonable to assume, that members of the community would be more likely to help with something that would support the community. He believed the perception by society of the contemporary artist was that they were just like everyone else. This observation supported Chiapello's (2004) proposition that the artist has lost unique attributes, due to the commodification of art:

Owing to the democratisation of knowledge and society, they [artists] are now little more than mere citizens, one amongst many – simple professionals or workers who are active in a specific type of work. Moreover, because of the way in which the culture industry has developed, the artistic community has also had to cope with the rise of a vast range of new professions that have trivialised, if not indeed destroyed, previous representations of the artist (p. 592).

The same participant felt that the contemporary view of the artist was that if they are part of the community, then they should operate within the community. He also felt

that there was a strange democracy being promulgated through art, which forced people into a situation, 'to acknowledge the fact that we're all in this together.' Du Bois (1995) described this as a radical democracy committed to the redistribution of wealth. She linked these ideas back to ancient Greece, which although evolved individualism, produced art works whose political meaning was more important than the maker.

In the world of classical antiquity, the objects themselves had a residual authority, divine or magical, that sometimes superseded any recognition of their makers. Ancient works of art were remembered as gifts of their donors rather than as productions of the genius of makers, or as occasions for the redistribution of wealth to all citizens. It is only our hunger for names, our emphasis on individualism, that lead to an art history based on the names of artists, or even of art as a fetishised category, as a series of commodities produced by post-Romantic artists. We need a historical sense of the production of the idea of art, or the idea of the artist, if we are to think ourselves into the future, perhaps even into an unfamiliar, unknown, utopian landscape of collective, anonymous, political works (p. 22).

Timms (2004) revealed that interest in heritage and tradition was an interest in measurement. 'We examine the practices of the past, or imbue certain objects with the power to evoke the past, in order to test how far we have progressed or declined, what we have gained or lost (p. 126). The re-evaluation and re-emergence of collaborative processes has allowed more opportunities for people to engage in art, particularly through community art projects. Collaborative practice has also provided people with greater access to skills and expertise allowing them to engage in art, by removing its aura of exclusivity. This seemed to be particularly evident in the case studies where artists worked with the community. 'They might not see themselves as artists in many cases, as contemporary artists, but ... by working with them in this context, they actually take on that possibility' (CSPOP). Hawkins (1990) described the value attributed to community art as being based on non-aesthetic or social criteria:

The measure of a community arts project's success is generally based on how well it expressed 'community' or the nature and quality of the cultural practices that emerged during the project. Most measures of value in community arts give a lot of attention to the conditions of production – how many people were involved, how they were involved and to the way the project evolved and its distribution (p. 64).

Parliament House in Canberra is one symbol of democracy and a reflection of the values that society wishes to emulate. The new Parliament House was conceived with the clear understanding that art and craft would be integrated into it, from its earliest design stages. As Cochrane (1992) has noted this was an innovation in Australian cultural history, and provided the artists and craftspeople involved with a clear validation of their expertise. The PHE was created to symbolise this democratic purpose, in both its construction and depiction of settlement. The acceptance of the PHE, created by 'ordinary women' from around Australia elevated textiles within the traditional art/craft hierarchy. Pateman (1991) stated that the arts have been affected by societal restrictions pertaining to gender, which has created an historical precedent for the way collaborative textile work had been perceived.¹⁶ A hierarchy of the arts was created in industrial Europe, which privileged painting and sculpture and relegated craftwork, often work done collectively by women to a separate inferior category (p. 51). Textiles has been re-evaluated as an important contemporary medium of expression, particularly because of the feminist movements. This re-evaluation allowed the PHE, which was created through contemporary and collaborative textile practices, to re-emerge because of changes in the social and cultural context of the time. Jones (2004), described the important historical connection between the technique of embroidery to the subject matter and the participants who created the PHE:

Despite the unexpected medium, it is entirely appropriate to construct Australian history in cloth and thread since textiles and writing are

¹⁶ It is revealing that a catalogue titled *Australian Paintings and Tapestries of the Past 20 Years*, produced to commemorate the opening of New South Wales House by Queen Elizabeth in 1972, does not feature or discuss any of the tapestries that were supposedly in the exhibition. A note from John Pagan the Agent General stated: 'These works demonstrate that Australian painting is admired and sought after throughout the world.'

intimately connected. Generations of little girls embroidered alphabets, names and improving maxims on samplers which they often dated, transforming those which survive into a form of historical documentation. Expressions like ‘spinning a yarn’ and ‘fabricating a story’ are still current and, for centuries, paper, the principal medium of written expression, was made from cloth rags. But few visitors walking along the gallery of the Great Hall to view the Parliament House Embroidery will recognise the process involved in its creation with all the careful choices of cloth, thread and stitch. In situ, the embroidery is an impressive, monumental and unified work of art. It also makes a powerful political statement, perhaps the strongest of any artwork in Parliament House (p. 59).

Large scale textile projects have often been collaborative, and usually created by women. However, they have traditionally not achieved the same prominence as work in traditional fine arts media such as painting, drawing and sculpture.¹⁷ Although the PHE has been installed permanently in Parliament House, it was the only gift to be accepted by the committee. Ironically, this acceptance both valued and devalued the work because of its voluntary origins.¹⁸ As one of the participants noted however, if the women had been paid it would have ‘broken the bank’ (CSPHE). Mockros & Csikszentmihalyi (1999), in their research on eminent creative women, found that women receive less positive affirmation from the field for their interests and abilities: ‘Professional institutions reward women less than men for comparable achievements. Women receive less pay for performing similar tasks, and are promoted and honoured less than men for similar accomplishments’ (p. 210). Some of the CSPHE participants noted that their husbands did not realise the importance of what they were doing until it had been completed: ‘I think it gradually dawned on them’ (CSPHE). Many of the CSPHE participants were disappointed that the PHE had not received greater prominence. Rogoff (2003) stated: ‘The occupations and relative power of adult women and men guide the social relations that are expected, encouraged and practised in childhood’ (p. 191). Young boys have been affirmed for their progress and ability, whereas the accomplishments of girls are either ignored or discouraged by significant

¹⁷ Unfortunately some women fine artists have denigrated women textiles artists, resulting in a ‘gender within a gender’ issue, as well as a gender issue.

¹⁸ One of the participants revealed that at a conference someone stated that the PHE was devalued because it was created with voluntary labour.

adults (Mockros & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999, p. 184). The effect of changes in social and cultural development on the re-emergence of collaboration has also been evidenced by more flexible working arrangements. This has allowed spouses to play a more supportive role in helping one another's career achievements during adulthood: 'They can provide encouragement, emotional and financial support, and a peaceful home environment conducive to full concentration on professional goals' (Mockros & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999, p. 198).

Changes in the cultural and social expectations of men and women have encouraged an increase in creative and collaborative approaches which have taken into account a holistic view of people rather than with their skills viewed separately. Montuori (1992) stated that: 'Sex-specific interests and traits that are descriptive of men and women in general seem to break down when we examine creative people' (p. 199). This statement appeared to support the view that creative individuals are not limited by stereotypical gender behaviours. 'They do not have stereotypically 'male' or 'female' personality characteristics. Rather, they move freely across a spectrum of possible 'human' behaviours' (Montuori, 2003, p. 7). Goatz and Mondejar (2005) described creative people as tending towards androgyny because of their ability to balance the masculine and feminine parts of their personalities (p. 245). As social and cultural roles become less regimented, people have become less restricted by what they perceive to be the way they should interact with one another. Mockros & Csikszentmihalyi (1999) noted that 'research has found that boys generally evaluate themselves more positively when they identify themselves as being more competitive, autonomous and independent' (p. 184). This behaviour has been ingrained from an early age. However, the attribute of autonomy is not one which encourages collaboration between other people, but can provide important attributes for leadership.

Artistic practice is also situated in the social system and culture in which it has been produced. Turpin and Crawford discussed the impetus of their practice and training, originating in the 1980s, with its emphasis on installation, electronic and ephemeral art. Crawford noted: '... that's our environment, that's our moment in time.' The word collaboration, as evidenced in the literature review, was first used in an art catalogue with the opening of the *Artistic Collaboration in the Twentieth Century*

exhibition (McCabe, 1984). Therefore, the re-emergence of collaboration may also be linked to art movements which actively sought to subvert the West's entrenched monopoly of the white, male, artistic genius.¹⁹ Turpin and Crawford both acknowledged that they were working in public art at a time when it is developing into an industry, a time of increasing commodification by the commercial sector. Though there has been an increasing integration of artworks with architecture, Roots (2002) noted that the physical manifestation of public art often belied its extensive input from initial planning to final construction:

The development of public art follows a process unprecedented in the production of any other art. It is the meeting of minds on many levels. It is visible and obvious, and open to the criticism of anyone who experiences its outward presentation. However, what is seen of public art is usually only the tip of the collaboration between artist, community groups, civic planners, and architects. An original idea is scrutinised from the outset, sometimes diluted or expanded from a specific focus, and presented as a response to a variety of factors' (p. 13).

Similarly, Turpin and Crawford undertake extensive research regarding the chosen site, including both its historical and social significance, in order to create public art that involves and challenges the community. In addition, the increasing commodification of art by the corporate sector (Chiapello, 2004; Cornford & Cross, 2004; Holmes, 2004; Roberts, 2004; Peter Timms, 2004), has encouraged the public to have greater input into the design and selection of these types of works, in order to create a sense of ownership.

Table 17 briefly summarised the responses from the participants regarding what they perceived to be the reason/s for the re-emergence of collaboration in contemporary art and society:

¹⁹ As an example, in 1970 women who were part of the feminist movement in North American and Great Britain gathered politically for the first time in modern history to protest their exclusion from male-dominated exhibitions and institutions.

Case Studies	Reasons for the Re-emergence of Collaboration
CSPHE	Unique purpose of project; the opportunity to face challenges together; working together provides greater opportunities; confidence in completing more complicated projects; establishment of personal connections; women volunteer more than men; women are more used to working together; part of history/ethos of group; has always been evident, just not always acknowledged; and balances inequity.
CSVTV	The significant role of mentors; confidence between people grows and supports collaboration; lack of ego fosters collaboration; some professions have a higher status, those with lower need to find ways to exist.
CSPOP	Contemporary art trying to generate a wider audience; contemporary art goes through cycles where it is more community engaged; men are more frequently affirmed for their work, women have to find ways to be recognised; people's perceptions regarding traditional stereotypes; and the intellectualisation of art and craft.

Table 17: Reasons for the re-emergence of collaboration

The reasons given for the re-emergence of collaboration varied from the observation that it had always existed, but people involved were not always acknowledged, to factors such as gender, stereotypes and the perception of art and craft in society. Roberts (2004) argued that the disclosure of labour in the art work is the primary purpose of collaboration:

In a period where the labour of the artist and the labour of the worker are largely hidden as values, this is what underwrites the significance of the turn to collaboration today. The debate on collaboration is the means whereby labour *in* the artwork is made conspicuous and critical (p. 563).

Roberts revealed that artists and society need to be aware of how the unique properties of art have been used to convey powerful and emotive messages through such means as advertising.²⁰ In contrast John-Steiner (2000) stated that collaboration, particularly across different generations, as seen in the PHE and the VTW collaboration between Rachel Hine and Meg Benwell occurred when: 'participants of different ages are linked by a desire to bridge time and join their talents. Collaboration across generations has been seen as an expression of hope' (p. 151). Hobbs, cited in McCabe (1984) revealed that society and artists were inextricably linked, which supported Csikszentmihalyi's systems view of creativity. Hobbs noted that collaborative art provided the viewer with the opportunity to view a dialogue, which

²⁰ Visual literacy is a skill which is being increasingly and visibly fostered in art curricula.

in an era of individualism was a rare and unique conversation, and one which more people are beginning to listen to:

In the past two decades, collaboration has not been art's mainstay, but it has provided artists with an alternative way of looking and reacting to the world. Sociologists remind us that our society is dynamic, not static, and is concerned with acquiring experiences rather than objects: we are still materialistic, only we wish to purchase those items such as vacations, lessons, computers, dinners, and video games that will allow us opportunities to see, learn and grow. If this is true, and I certainly think it is, then collaborative art enables both artist and viewer a more involved and dynamic experience than earlier art. With collaborative art, we can no longer assume that we are having an aesthetic and private mediation on the distilled sensibility of another person. When we look at a collaborative work of art, we are examining a dialogue or conversation between artists. And we do not dumbly gaze, awestruck with aesthetic pleasure; we must participate by thinking about the interaction that takes place and actually start interacting with the art ourselves. (McCabe, 1984, p. 85)

Contemporary arts practice exists in a fragmented, multi-faceted culture as opposed to the dominant, monolithic view which previously existed in earlier centuries. One of the artist's roles as a cultural critic was to reflect on underlying assumptions that exist within a rapidly changing and diverse society. However, as Neperud (1995) noted, 'the meaning of art is dependent on and intertwined with the context of society' (p. 6). Brenson (1995) revealed that 'art opposes power and [that] this opposition is cleansing – in other words, [that] art brings health to the body politic' (p. 71). This has created an interesting tension, resulting in collaborative processes providing physical and tangible evidence of the communication process that had been undertaken in either a short or longer term project. Collaboration has re-emerged as a response to changes in society and culture. The third entity, produced through collaboration, has been and will be representative of a community-minded response which seeks to support through process, yet challenge through outcome, societal and cultural contexts.

Stages of Collaboration

There were a number of complex issues, particularly concerning relational dynamics which needed to be considered in this study. Additionally, it became evident that a sound knowledge of group stages, and how to facilitate these were important to successful collaborative practices. The following section briefly describes the roles of forming, storming, norming and performing with particular reference to the collaborative process.

Forming

As noted previously, it is important to understand the differences between the words cooperation, coordination and collaboration before undertaking a project which can be described as collaborative. Although collaboration can involve all of these, they ultimately feed into, and become incorporated, in the collaborative process. Deciding on whether a project will be termed collaborative or not, necessarily includes the same research and preparation of, and with, the participants. Collaboration emphasises the process of human dynamics. However, some form of leadership will be mandatory for a collaboration to be successful. Smaller groups or partnerships will often use a form of facilitative leadership. By necessity, larger groups will require more visible structures to proceed effectively. Winer and Ray (2000) noted that given the greater intensity involved in collaboration, the investment in it must be worth the effort. The participants are the most important asset at this forming stage, and must be willing to engage in collaboration for it to be successful (Farrell, 2001; John-Steiner, 2000; Winer & Ray, 2000). They must also be aware of their responsibilities within the collaboration, particularly their role in building an understanding of each other's behaviour and culture.

As indicated earlier it was evident from both the literature review and case studies that social events facilitated greater communication and camaraderie amongst groups. Creating connections between participants becomes vital at this formative stage of the collaborative process. Whilst there must be a purpose which has brought the participants together, the overriding factor inherent in the participants is that they wish to be part of a group. By its nature, a group is a social structure with its own identity, needs and desires. Participants need to feel a sense of security and belonging

to their group, or they will be unable to effectively contribute to its development. This in turn will affect the group's motivation and sense of community.

The forming stage of the collaborative process should include all participants in the direction that the group will take and the type of projects that will be undertaken. As Wright (2004) stated: 'it seems virtually evident to most artists – that collaboration is founded upon *mutual interest*' [Emphasis in original] (p. 534). Although self-interest has been often viewed negatively, it is an important factor in people's motivation to engage in the collaborative process and has been described as a success factor (Mattessich et al., 2004). The size of a collaborative group was also an important element to consider, as too many participants will devalue the process by not providing a forum for everyone's input. Winer and Ray (2000) recommended that up to fifteen people were ideal for any one group. Farrell (2001) found that within groups people often split up and work in dyads, using this more intimate relationship to explain and examine their ideas before bringing them back to the group. These smaller groups should be encouraged particularly in the forming stage of the collaboration, with opportunities allowed for sharing information with the larger group. However, they can also extend into the other group stages.

Because of their nature, larger groups in particular require a clear outline of what is being proposed for the project. These groups work most effectively when the design or project has been clearly planned, and articulated, before the participants have met. Participants then decided to join the group based on their perceived merit of the project. Although the PHE consisted of hundreds of embroiderers, there were smaller groups from each state overseen by section leaders, who facilitated the necessary communication and leadership required. The VTW weavers were a small and select group, chosen for their skills and expertise. Their history of working together and with artists has created a system, which works effectively and efficiently. The largest group in CSPOP was Vella's, which worked well because of the communication that he had set up prior to the project commencing. Vella also had clear directions and instructions for the participants so that they were able to complete their tasks.

Storming

Timms (2005) believed that we ‘tend to see art not as a spur to fellow-feelings and companionship, but as the competitive expression of the individual ego’ (p. 22). However, John-Steiner (2000) countered that some artists engaged in the collaborative process ‘are skilled in knowing how to modulate it, fine-tune it, and, at times, build some artistic distance between each other while treasuring their primary connection’ (p. 84). Gude (1989) added that ‘sometimes the democracy of group decision making can initially work against the sensibilities of professional artists’ (p. 322). The paradox of artistic collaboration, as evidenced in the literature review, has been that the words have been traditionally antithetical of one another. However, given that collaboration has re-emerged as a valid form of artistic practice, it is important to be aware of artistic sensibilities amongst participants. Participants from arts sectors need to consider whether collaboration, with its emphasis on group identity, is what they are seeking.

If participants have not established personal connections with each other and the group during the forming stage, then they may feel less confident in voicing their opinions during the storming stage. The challenging of opinions may be taken personally rather than in the spirit of collaborative discussion. Leadership during this stage will be seen as extremely important, for personal agendas amongst participants can sabotage the primary purpose of the collaboration. A thorough understanding of participants’ backgrounds and cultures is most beneficial during this stage. As Mattessich et al., (2004) noted: ‘Collaboration thrives on diversity of perspective and on constructive dialogues between individuals negotiating their differences while sharing their shared voice and vision’ (p. 6).

During the storming stage leaders and participants need to be clearly aware of their roles and responsibilities. The participation of collaborators should not be limited to that of the technician, where the art is still the prerogative of the artist (McCabe, 1984, p. 80). Both the embroiderers and weavers brought a high level of skills to their work, which was and is extended when they worked with artists. As noted in the case studies, sound communication, explanation of goals and purpose, and awareness of roles and responsibilities should result in a storming stage which has been productive.

Norming

The conclusion of the storming stage should result in a clear understanding of each person's responsibilities and roles. The group will have a well established social identity in addition to a shared sense of purpose. At this stage it is important that the leader recognises participants' skills and expertise and whether they require support to complete their task/s. The momentum of the norming stage is important. Constant, clear and regular communication will ensure that participants are aware of what needs to be achieved and how. If participants are working on a project it is vital that timelines have been prepared and sufficient preparation has been undertaken for this stage to run smoothly.

Leadership can still be important at this juncture, but communication between participants and the leader begins to take precedence. Issues which may arise to disrupt or detour the project need to be dealt with quickly, with an overall understanding of the entire project. The process and the project should be equally important, with due consideration given to the participants who are enabling the project to happen. Important achievements should be celebrated such as milestones reached in the project, during this norming stage. Winer and Ray (2000) also confirmed that it was important to reward people in collaborations: 'For some people, a reward is just having their ideas heard or having their contribution recognised' (p. 92). This internal form of acknowledgment from the leader and/or fellow participants can be sometimes more important to group members than external recognition. During this stage there must also be an appropriate pace of development which is suitable for the group. 'The structure, resources, and activities of the collaborative group change over time to meet the needs of the group without overwhelming its capacity, at each point throughout the initiative' (Mattessich et al., 2004, p. 9).

Performing

The performing stage signals that the group has been functioning at a high level and goals are being met. At this time the work itself is seen as a 'third entity', and often takes priority. There should be enough security amongst participants for them to become more flexible in their roles, depending on the overall needs of the group. In a large group project, the performing stage would be the most conducive to encouraging collaboration. Participants feel more confident in exploring ideas with the leader, and

have demonstrated enough skills and expertise to follow through their propositions. The case studies revealed that during this stage, participants were concerned that the 'third entity' was professionally presented, as they felt it was a reflection of their group identity. Concern with the work itself becomes more important, as individual participants put their own needs aside, until it is completed. At this stage particular expertise outside the group may be required in terms of presentation. The leader needs to be aware of and make allowance for these requirements. For example, an extensive amount of time was set aside in CSPHE to acclimatise and then join the embroidered sections together, in addition to creating the case for permanent installation of the PHE. The VTW set aside time to make and drill metal bars for the top of their tapestries so that they lay flat and flush to the wall. Turpin and Crawford required specialists to install their large site-specific works. Vella created his own hanging system to present the students' photographs, in a unified and aesthetically pleasing way. Each of the groups demonstrated their awareness of how the work would be presented and the associations that would be made with their identity.

It was interesting to note that the case studies revealed Storming (.37%) as being the least evident of the group stages. The Performing stage (2.9%) was the highest. When the nodes Performing (2.9%) and Third Entity (1.3%) were joined they resulted in a 4.1% return. This outcome indicated that the participants in the case studies valued the product of their process quite highly, and were able to quickly move through the Forming (2.2%), Storming (.37%), Norming (2.5%) stages to the purpose for the collaboration. The smaller return for Storming could also be attributed to a lack of experience and confidence in the CSPHE participants, who looked to Lawrence for leadership. The CSVTW participants have had a long history of collaboration together, and financial obligations necessitate a negligible storming stage. The CSPOP participants were motivated by self-interest to create the third entity of the exhibition. The third entity reflected the quality of the artist's work, the curator and gallery director's involvement and its public and professional presentation.

The next section will utilise the results from this chapter to formulate a suggested model for collaborative practice and recommendations for further study which can be undertaken.

Conclusion

The literature research has indicated that models of collaborative practice have been developed and utilised in sectors such as business, technology, the community and education, which have aimed to facilitate social or collective activity. Organisational theory has increasingly recognised the value of human creativity and innovation. As Sawyer (2006) stated: 'Before the 1980s, creativity was thought to be only occasionally important to a corporation; but today most business leaders believe that creativity is critical to the survival of their organisation' (p. 5). This increased interest in creativity has allowed a shift in focus away from the individual creator to the creativity of groups. Sawyer has (2006) noted that in order to explain group creativity, we have to focus on collaboration among group members. As Bolman and Deal (2003) have stated: '... changes in technology, changes in the workforce [have] put pressure on traditional hierarchical forms. Dramatically different structural forms are emerging as a result' (p. 65). These different structural forms have become increasingly evident in sectors engaged with society (Adler, Shani, & Styhre, 2004; Bolman & Deal, 2003; Friend & Cook, 2003; Harrison, 1993; Hooker et al., 2003; Littleton et al., 2004; Montuori, 1992; Montuori & Purser, 1995; Purser & Montuori, 1999; Saint-Onge & Wallace, 2003; Sawyer, 2006; Stern & Hicks, 2000; Sundgren & Styre, 2004; Travis, 1997).

As the literature review and discussion of findings revealed, there are many advantages to working collaboratively. Where collaboration has been successful it has provided, both intrinsic and extrinsic, rewards to the participants. However, many people engage in the collaborative process without being fully aware of the depth of commitment required. One apparent problem in proposing a model for collaborative practice in the arts, appeared, initially, to be the perception that it would undermine the artistic process, characterised by autonomy, the blurring of boundaries and authorship. The literature review revealed that societal perceptions of creativity have been, and are continuing to be, influenced by changes in society. The changing status of the artist from an artisan, highly skilled in a specific area, through to the diverse range of skilled labour available to be used by the contemporary artist, it can be argued, has represented almost a complete reversal. Roberts (2004) proposed that

collaboration was a self-conscious process for production, because the socially-produced character of art has been made explicit in the form of the work:

Teamworking, shared skilled and ideas across disciplines, manipulating prefabricated materials (the labour of others), negotiating with various institutions and agencies, become the means whereby art's place within the social division of labour is made transparent as a form of socialised labour (p. 557).

Therefore, it could be argued, that a model for collaborative artistic practice is both timely, and necessary, given collaboration's integral and visible emphasis on shared labour. Roberts and Wright (2004) noted that there was no model of collaboration which allowed artists to address issues pertaining to shared labour in their work (p. 531).

The proposed collaborative model has been created from the findings of the case studies and information gained through the review of literature. As noted in the previous chapter Leadership and Communication were vital to the success of collaborative ventures. Skills and Expertise in addition to Support were also seen to be necessary to effective collaboration. The four stages of group formation: Forming (2.2%), Storming (.37%), Norming (2.5%) and Performing (2.9%) were given different emphasis by the participants. The lower percentage for Storming revealed that this stage was either managed effectively, in the case of Turpin and Crawford, or that the participants went along readily with the leader's suggestions and/or directions, as in Vella's community projects. In CSPHE, the embroiderers worked through many of the visual and technical problems themselves; the weavers in CSVTW adopted a strategy which efficiently and effectively moved through this stage; and at least three of the four groups of artists in CSPOP had prior relationships with the people they were working with, so were able to engage in faster communication processes: 'We edit for each other' (Crawford, CSPOP). These stages however are necessary to move through in a collaborative process, and the Forming and Storming stages need to be managed particularly well when engaging in a new collaboration. The pie chart below visually represents how the characteristics described above manifested themselves from the case study data. These include:

Leadership (7.5%); Communication (7%); Skills & Expertise (5.9%); Support (5.2%); Third Entity (1.3%); Forming (2.2%); Storming (.37%); Norming (2.5%); and Performing (2.9%). This gives some indication of the emphasis placed by participants on the various elements as they experienced them in the collaborative process.

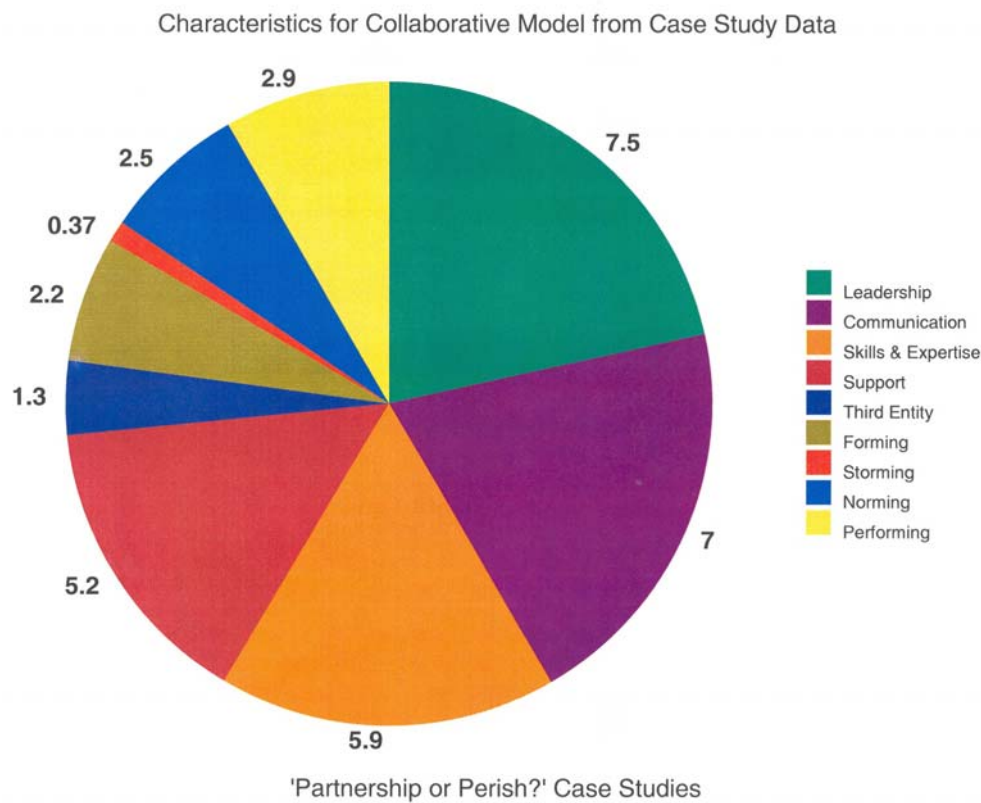


Figure 7: Characteristics for Collaborative Model based on Case Study data

Characteristics of the Collaborative Model

Leadership

From the case studies and literature review it became evident that collaboration required a form of leadership which was devolved, yet still retained responsibility for final decisions, if the group was unable to reach an agreement. This type of leadership facilitated opportunities for members of the group. Leaders were sensitive to both task and process, and will often involve themselves in sharing the group's work. A facilitative leader needs to take their role and responsibilities very seriously. They should be recognised as someone who has good knowledge in the subject area. This type of leader also requires both organisational and interpersonal skills, and must be seen to carry out their role with fairness to all participants. Their leadership should

enable participants to feel a sense of autonomy and control, for their own role within the group.

Communication

Collaboration, has by its necessity, utilised an open form of communication. Participants had to reveal their thinking to one another to facilitate the collaborative process. Communication has been considered such an important element in collaboration that time, before and during the project, should be set aside so that participants have the opportunity to engage with one another. In all collaborative groups it is important to meet regularly, to ensure that everyone has access to the same information. If this does not occur participants may feel that they and other members were being treated differently. There also needed to be both formal and informal ways for communication to be facilitated within the group. Procedural issues such as payment, or work schedules on the project must be necessarily formalised. However, informal communication where participants had the opportunity to establish personal connections was extremely important. Providing opportunities for social occasions when this can occur will result in opportunities to network. Ultimately, the group will be more informed and will have more cohesion.

In collaborative groups it has been important to acknowledge the power of language. The use of jargon and terms which all participants may not be familiar with would be ultimately divisive. Clarification and clarity of terms utilised, ensures that all members of the group are speaking the same language. Meaning can be easily misconstrued, both in terms of text and language. Facilitative leaders and the group must encourage participants to clarify anything they are not sure of, nor comfortable with. This does not infer that collaborative groups have to be passive. As indicated by the research findings, challenging boundaries creates innovation.

The establishment of rapport, in a collaborative group, can only occur if relationships have first been fostered within the group, or developed during the collaboration. Encouragement to share stories and achievements in an atmosphere of mutual respect, understanding and trust does create rapport between participants. This mutual sharing also allowed participants to ascertain the different types of personalities within the group. As the group progressed, these stories of its achievements will become shared

stories for, and of, the participants. Becoming part of a group can be inherently risky for individuals, and demonstrated a degree of trust or willingness on the part of the participant. This trust needed to be reciprocated by the collaborative group.

Skills & Expertise

Everyone in a group hopes to find a comfortable, but personally satisfying role. The roles of each participant should be clearly articulated, but should also have flexibility and scope in order to evolve with the project. Expertise, skill and personality should be taken into account when choosing roles in a collaborative group. Participants should feel comfortable in articulating that they are not comfortable with a particular role, and encouraged to nominate another that could be more suitable. Each participant must be able to see how their role contributed to the group, so that they value not only their own input but other people's.

Participants usually form a collaborative group because a project cannot be completed by an individual, or because the collaborative process was an inherent part of the project. Shared vision must be an essential element, for the collaborative group. This will create a common goal which the group can strive towards, and also allow the formation of group identity to occur. Periodically, the facilitative leader must remind the group of the shared vision so that the group can reassess its procedures and short term goals.

Support

People have a strong need to be acknowledged, and to belong. This need, as strongly indicated in the various interviews, must also be facilitated in collaborative groups. The effort that participants expend in a collaborative group is required to be acknowledged. A facilitative leader should be aware of each participant's effort and input. At times, this may be affected by external forces outside the collaborative group such as family situations or health. If good communication and rapport have been established the participant may be able to confide to someone in the group and feel supported by their membership in it. The issue of authorship in collaborative groups needs to be established from the onset of the group. It is important however, even with a collective name, to be able to identify the participants.

The responsibility for bringing together a diverse range of people to work towards a common goal, necessitated adequate resources were provided. These resources include facilities, materials, and funds. If the collaborative group had not been resourced properly, it will find it difficult to achieve its goal. The participants were also providing their skills and time - which although more intangible - were important assets to the collaborative group. This in-kind support should be equally valued. Facilitative leaders must understand that providing physical resources encouraged participants to willingly share personal resources.

Third Entity

The Third Entity was the outcome of the group's purpose for engaging in the collaborative process. In CSPHE there were a number of stakeholders involved, but ultimately the third entity was the Parliament House Embroidery. CSVTW participants were solely engaged in creating high quality, and superbly executed contemporary tapestries which became the third entity in this case study. CSPOP participants, including the gallery director, curator, artists and volunteers were all working towards creating and presenting work for the third entity which was the *Partnership or Perish?* exhibition. The third entity encapsulated the group's identity, and therefore particular attention was paid to its professional presentation in the public domain.

It is important that participants are involved in the defining and/or naming of the third entity, and that the entity is referred to by that name, particularly as it becomes more visible in the norming and performing stages of the project. As the project intensifies, the third entity will seemingly become to the participants more important than their own needs. The third entity appears to take on its own personality as participants sublimate their ego and work effectively together towards a shared goal: 'The need to produce a superb embroidery was more important than your own ego' (CSPHE); 'When it was finished we took the painting into the back yard and we burnt it, so there was only the tapestry left' (CSVTW); 'You have to stop worrying about yourself and, well I guess you worry about the work' (CSPOP).

Issues of ownership and authorship were also encapsulated in the third entity. Issues of acknowledgment were discussed in each of the case studies and varied from the

sole use of a collective group name, to also including individual names with the work or in conjunction with other documentation. This acknowledgment, however, did not negate the importance of ownership for individual participants. The literature review and findings revealed that self-satisfaction was particularly important for participants in group projects. In a collaborative process participants understand that individual extrinsic ownership of the third entity is not possible: ‘... it’s just another entity altogether’ (CSPOP). However, the need for recognition both within and outside the group varied and can be related to the ‘cultural assumptions regarding individual or community priority, which [are] carried in the habitual relationships of everyday life’ (Rogoff, 2003, p. 234). This was evident in responses from some of the participants who recognised the priority of the third entity, but were pleased when their individual effort had also been recognised:

And then of course came the excitement later on, when as a supervisor, I was invited over to the opening of Parliament House, and that was really lovely. And when we were sitting in the front row, and the Queen came down with her entourage, following behind were all the Governor’s wives, and our Governor and his wife of course were there, and I felt very honoured because she broke her line, when she saw me, came over to me and gave me a great big hug. She said “On behalf of the people of Western Australia thank you so much for a wonderful job (Rusty Walkley, CSPHE).

A breakdown of the percentages with the Third Entity node revealed that its importance gradually increased through the PHE (1.25%), VTW (2.1%) and POP (3.47%) case studies. A number of reasons were described in chapter eight which explained the reasons for this increase, which included issues of acknowledgment and ownership.

The characteristics described above were selected as integral elements of a recommended model for collaboration in the arts. The case studies and literature review revealed that the third entity is both a process and a product. However, because the arts are predominately product-based, process and product are equally important. Therefore, the third entity, which represents working processes, final

product, and issues of acknowledgment and ownership was placed in the centre of the diagram below. The characteristics of Leadership, Communication, Skills and Expertise, and Support intersect one another, and affect the Third Entity. Placed around the diagram are the four group stages of Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing, which groups will move through at different rates.

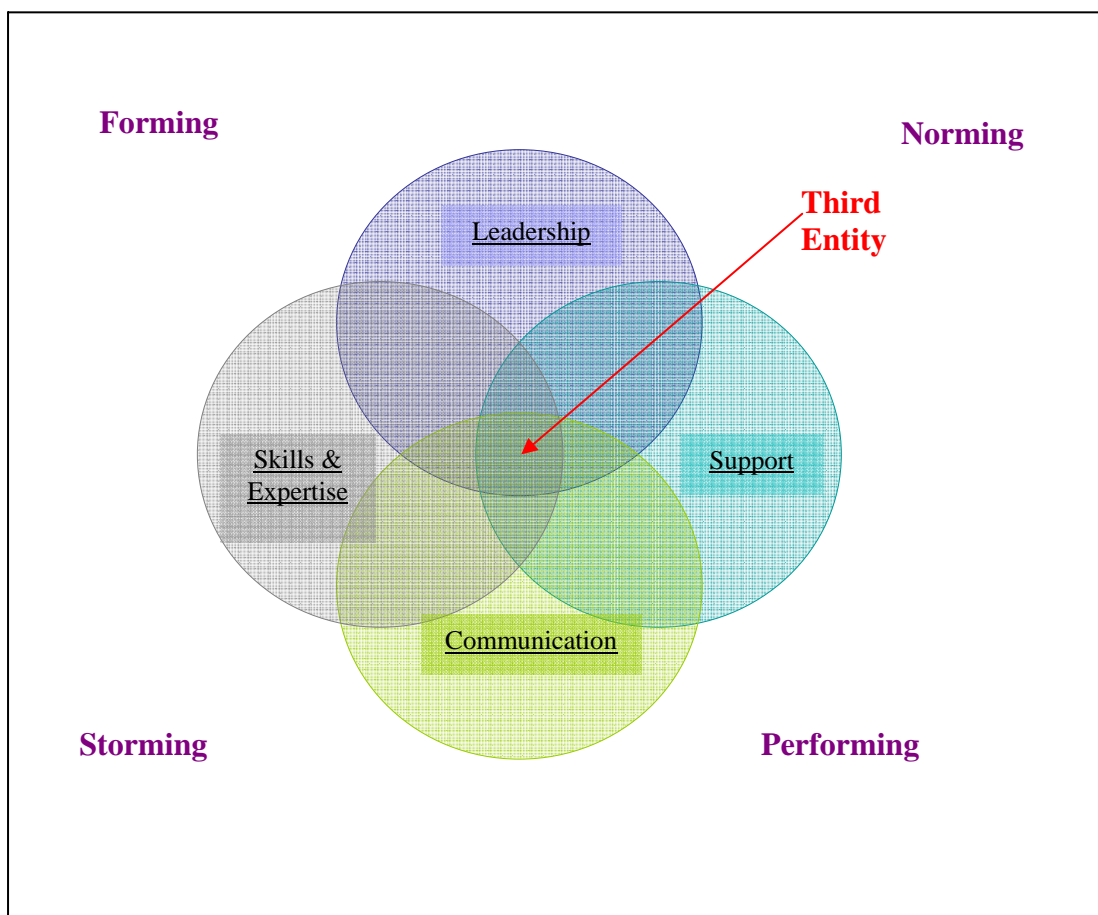


Figure 8: Suggested model of collaboration for arts practitioners

Appendix 1K provides a summary of the characteristics related to the collaborative model and their location in the key texts utilised for this study. The texts related specifically to the arts (Farrell (2001); Gardner et al., (2006); Green (2001); John-Steiner (2000) have been shaded. The Farrell and Gardner texts included leadership as an important element within the collaborative process, which revealed an increasing recognition in the arts sector of its necessity.

A checklist of questions related to the characteristics portrayed as essential factors in the collaborative process has been presented on the following pages, in order to guide participants through the forming, storming, norming and performing stages. However,

it is important to be aware that collaboration cannot be mandated. The model has been provided as a guide for those in the arts sectors, who may not be aware through their arts training, of the complexities involved in engaging in collaboration.

Characteristics	Questions to Consider
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you know about the participants' backgrounds? • What do the participants know about your background? • How will you allow everyone to feel valued in the group? • Have you organised a time at the beginning of the project for everyone to share their story and their hopes for the collaboration? • Are you modelling the type of collaborative atmosphere that is fostered through mutual respect, trust and understanding? • Have you discussed the shared vision with the group to ensure that everyone has ownership and the opportunity to modify or clarify it as required? • Have you developed an image or a slogan with the group to remind them of the shared vision you are all working towards? • Have you fostered opportunities to publicise the shared vision?
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you considered how information will be disseminated to the group? • Has the project been clearly conveyed to everyone? • What strategies will you use to ensure that everyone is able to participate in group decision-making processes? • What procedures will you employ for conflict resolution? • Are there other people who can fill the role of facilitative leader if you are unable to? • Have you explained any jargon that may be used during the collaboration so that everyone is speaking the same language? • Will you clarify any misunderstandings immediately and if required do so publicly? • Have you used clear expression and avoided using particular phrases or words with only a certain person or group?
Skills & Expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ensured that every participant has clearly defined roles and responsibilities? • Have you ensured that every participant can see how their role feeds into the overall project? • Have you examined participants' roles and responsibilities and ensured they are adequate to the skills and experience - neither too limited or advanced? • Is there in-built flexibility in the project to cater for changing roles and responsibilities? • Are participants aware that they can work in different combinations with other people if required or needed?
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ensured that participants' input is valued and acknowledged? • Have you ensured that everyone is recognised in subsequent documentation about the project by using their names if possible in addition to a collective name? • Have you acknowledged particular milestones during the project at regular intervals? • Are you aware of special occasions such as birthdays, and have you encouraged them to be celebrated with the group? • Have you fostered a sense of belonging in the group? Do people look forward to working together? • Have you ensured there are adequate resources for the group to be able to complete individual tasks and the overall project? • Are you aware of and accommodated basic needs such as a refrigerator and kettle for participants? • Have you encouraged the sharing of conceptual resources as a significant asset of the group?
Third Entity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you discussed the unique nature of working collaboratively, in that it produces something which an individual could not have achieved on their own? • Have you described how the work will become representative of the group as a 'third entity'? • If the group has been formed for a unique purpose, have you allowed time to discuss the notion of the 'third entity' and will you provide an opportunity for the group as a whole to name it? • Have issues pertaining to ownership of the third entity been discussed?

Table 18: Checklist of questions for the Forming and Storming Stages of the collaborative process

Characteristics	Questions to Consider
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has your leadership style adapted and changed to suit the evolving nature of the collaboration? • Have you delegated responsibility to participants who have shown they are enthusiastic, committed to the third entity and have sound interpersonal skills? • Have you ensured other leaders are trusted and respected by the participants? • Have you clearly conveyed to all participants, if appropriate, how leadership has been devolved to other participants and the reasons for this? • In your leadership capacity do you feel that the group has the necessary skills to move through to the performing stage or is it necessary to seek extra expertise for this to occur? • Are you willing and able to share rewards of the performing stage with all participants? • How will you acknowledge participants after the performing stage has been successfully reached?
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ensured that communication flow is maintained between participants, and that there are designated responsible persons for groups of more than fifteen people? • Have you ensured that as the intensity of the group increases good communication is maintained, particularly as the performing stage is reached? • Is a common language being used by all participants to refer to particulars of the third entity? • Is everybody clearly aware of important milestones that must be reached and which participants are responsible for the completion of tasks?
Skills & Expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ensured that all participants are aware of the in-built flexibility in the project to cater for changing roles and responsibilities? • Is there more than one person who is aware of what is required, and has the necessary skills to take over if needed, particularly during the performing stage of the project when intensity can be at its greatest? • Are there designated leaders who can offer support and ensure the level of expertise is consistent throughout the norming and performing stages?
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you continued to ensure that participants' input is valued and acknowledged? • Have you continued to acknowledge important milestones during the project, particularly during the performing stage? • Have you continued to engage participants in a social life apart from their work on the third entity? • Do participants still feel a sense of belonging and commitment to the group? • Does the group have adequate resources to present the third entity in a professional manner which reflects well on their shared group identity? • Have you continued to ensure that basic comforts such as a refrigerator and kettle have been maintained through the project? • Have you made time to encourage the sharing of conceptual resources, particularly in brainstorming sessions as the group moves toward the performing stage?
Third Entity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the Third Entity have a well established identity which encapsulates the vision and goals of the group? • Do participants refer to the Third Entity by name? • Does documentation contain both the Third Entity's name in addition to the individual participants' names? • Have issues of ownership pertaining to the Third Entity been decided on?

Table 19: Checklist of questions for the Norming and Performing Stages of the collaborative process

Conclusion

The model of collaboration has been defined from the data findings and research literature, and has been presented here for arts practitioners to comprehend the level

of preparation required, before collaboration can commence. Collaborators in partnerships have often worked through many of these complexities before engaging in this process, due to their prior relationship and similar ideologies and backgrounds. However, as the interest in collaborative processes increases, due to the reasons outlined in chapter eight, it is important to understand the significance of the process *and* the product. Acknowledging the skills and expertise of participants, in addition to fostering interpersonal skills within the collaboration will result in a fulfilling and enriching experience for all concerned. The complexities involved in the collaborative process however, particularly those concerned with human dynamics, reveals that it is rare and difficult to achieve:

The capacity of two people to function together almost as one mind is not only the most efficient of all possible working relations. It is also a profound human experience. But by its very nature it cannot be had simply by the asking (Sowers, 1983, p. 96).

The aim of this study was to investigate the process of collaboration through three arts-based case studies in order to reveal the purpose for engaging in collaboration, key factors necessary for its success and the reasons for its re-emergence. In addition, the creation of a recommended model for collaborative practice was illustrated from the findings. The word collaboration was found to be increasingly used in many sectors. It appeared that although the intrinsic worth of collaboration is valued, a limited understanding of what is entailed has sometimes resulted in unsuccessful and ineffective outcomes. Unfortunately this can affect future endeavours, in addition to demoralising previously enthusiastic participants.

Ironically, the arts sector is well placed to engage in collaborative practice, due to many of the inherent success factors identified in the findings. Issues of ego, authorship and ownership, however, promulgated through their recent emphasis in art history has discouraged many artists from collaborating with others. Additionally, the place of art in contemporary society has been challenged. Artists are required to engage with other disciplines and technologies and present their work in a manner which reflects elements of commodification. Artists have always provided one mirror for society, and the twenty-first century artist will be no exception. In many sectors

collaboration has been elevated as a process which can both advantage and disadvantage participants. The corporatisation of collaboration can be advantageous, if the human dynamics involved are equally balanced with the output or third entity. Unsustainable collaborations occur when participants are used without sharing in the risks and rewards from the process.

The literature review revealed that the arts sector recognised the importance of human dynamics within collaboration, but failed to properly acknowledge the intrinsic elements of leadership and communication within this process. Artists have traditionally lacked leadership training, which appears to be antithetical of the stereotyped image of the artist. However, as the collaborative process increasingly becomes necessary for artists to engage in, in order to further their practice, there are a number of recommendations which can be made from this study.

Arts institutions, which train arts practitioners, need to include basic organisational and leadership units in their courses to equip students, with the necessary skills, to undertake group projects during their training. There should continue to be incentives to encourage artists to work interdisciplinary with other sectors, as this will enhance their practice and enable art to be seen as an important contributor to the community. Collaborative practice is one way to restore social continuity to the arts, placing artists and their work back into the community. Although artists have traditionally had the perceived luxury of being misunderstood, collaborative practice forces participants to engage in an open form of communication. This clarifies and consolidates the important message which participants seek to transmit to their audience – the community. Therefore, the role of the ‘third entity’ in contemporary arts practice, as an arbitrator between artists and society warrants further investigation.

Further research also needs to be undertaken into the complexity of collaboration, particularly the psychological needs of participants. Some participants may use the third entity as a way to disguise their contribution to the project, but wish to remain involved because of the social identity which they have gained, and which provides meaning for them. Another area of interest for further study would include the extent to which the group dynamic of highly successful groups is affected by gender, personality, or a combination of both. The role of technology and its ability to

remove the traditional biases which exist in verbal communication and its effect on the collaborative process could be linked to this area to provide further insights into these issues.

An investigation into whether the collaborative process is a particularly indigenous way of working would be beneficial. A comparison of social and cultural contexts regionally, nationally and internationally would provide important information regarding the role of leadership, communication, skills and expertise and support. The community approach adopted by many indigenous cultures could be further investigated through the concept of the third entity which is seemingly more ingrained in traditional indigenous societies.

Another area of investigation which could be considered includes the role of public art and its power to disenfranchise people. The role of the government in public art with its allocation of a percentage to art in public buildings could be evaluated, and examined. Of particular interest would be the extent of the government in such policy and the reasons for its adoption of such a collaborative approach.

A comparative arts study to trial the collaborative model, in order to investigate whether the weightings between the key characteristics remain proportional would provide an interesting insight into the complexity of collaboration.¹ Such a study would necessarily be affected and modified by other participants and contexts. The global benefits of collaboration, and its often visible and physical manifestation in areas such as the arts, and projects such as *The Long March*,² would further extend insights into this area. Collaboration is a process which focuses on human dynamics and elements such as compassion for other people. An investigation of its global

¹ The appendixes containing the interview transcripts, email correspondence, QSR N6 index and the significant statements, formulated meanings and categories have been provided for future researchers who wish to further investigate the complexity of the collaborative process.

² *The Long March* replicates Mao Zedong's historic march (1934-35) to deliver the Communist ideal to the Chinese proletariat. The contemporary *Long March* which began in 2002 aims to take both contemporary Chinese and international art to a sector of the Chinese public that has rarely, if ever, been exposed to such work. The Long March Project departed from Beijing in 2002 and consisted of artists, writers, curators, theorists and art activists from China and abroad.

impact in the arts, and its inherent potential to cultivate and respect differences is therefore necessary and expedient.

References

- Acker, J. (1990). Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. *Gender & Society*, 4, 139 - 158.
- Adams, J. (1991). There is Always a Simple Solution and it's Always Wrong. In V. Binns (Ed.), *Community and the Arts* (pp. 67 - 104). Marrickville, NSW: Pluto Press.
- Adler, N. (1993). An international perspective on the barriers to the advancement of women managers. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, Special Issue: Women in management*, 42(4), 289 - 300.
- Adler, N., Shani, A. B., & Styhre, A. (Eds.). (2004). *Collaborative Research in Organisations*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Alvesson, M., & Sköldbberg, K. (2005). *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.
- Amabile, T. (1986). The social psychology of creativity: A componential conceptualisation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 45, 357 - 377.
- The Angus & Robertson Dictionary and Thesaurus*. (1992). Sydney, NSW: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Atelier Man Ray: Abbott, Boiffard, Brandt, Miller, 1920-1935 (Catalogue). (1982). In W. Chadwick (Ed.), *Women Artists and the Surrealist Movement*. Paris: Musee National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou.
- A work of many hands: The Parliament House Embroidery*. (1989). Videorecording. Burwood, Victoria: Teaching Services Unit.
- Backhouse, D., Maddern, P., & Tomas, N. (1989). *Women in Medieval and Renaissance European History c.1100 - 1500 A Bibliography*. Melbourne: University Printing Services.
- Baechtel, M. (2005). *Mixing it up with collaborations*. Retrieved 21st November, 2005, from www.adn.com/life/v-printer/story/7221713p-7133688c.html
- Baker-Sennett, J., & Matusov, E. (1997). School "Performance": Improvisational Processes in Development and Education. In R. K. Sawyer (Ed.), *Creativity in Performance*. USA: Ablex Publishing.
- Baldock, C. (1998). Feminist Discourses of Unwaged Work: The Case of Volunteerism. *Australian Feminist Studies*, 13(27), 19 - 34.
- Bardez, C., & Throsby, D. (1997). *Similarity and Difference: Craftspeople and Visual Artists in Australia*. Strawberry Hills, NSW: Australia Council for the Arts.
- Barnacle, R. (Ed.). (2001). *Phenomenology*. Melbourne: RMIT University Press.
- Barrentine, P. (1993a). Women as Harbingers of Business Transformation. In P. Barrentine (Ed.), *When The Canary Stops Singing* (pp. 9 - 21). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- Barrentine, P. (Ed.). (1993b). *When The Canary Stops Singing*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- Barrett, F. (1999). Knowledge Creating as Dialogic Accomplishment: A Constructionist Perspective. In A. Montuori & R. Purser (Eds.), *Social Creativity* (Vol. 1, pp. 133 - 151). Cresskill, New Jersey: Hampton Press.
- Bartholomew, G. (Writer) (2004). The Sunday Show, ABC774 Melbourne, 7 Nov, 10.44am (Radio broadcast).

- Bassett, G. (1969). An Evaluation Model for Australian Education. *Education News*, 12(6).
- Becker, H. (1982). *Art Worlds*. Berkley, California: University of California Press.
- Belenky, M., Clinchy, B., Goldberger, N., & Tarule, J. (1986). *Women's Ways of Knowing*. USA: Basic Books Inc.
- Bell, R. (1984). Crafts - The Decorative Arts? A Servant of Rational Design A Vehicle for Creative Impulse? *Craft Australia*(3), 104 - 105.
- Bell, R. (2006). The crafted object 1960s-80s. *Artonview*(47), 16 - 23.
- Bennis, W., & Biderman, P. (1997). *Organising Genius: The Secrets of Creative Collaboration*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc.
- Bensimon, E. M. N., A. (1993). *Redesigning Collegiate Leadership*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Berg, P. (1988). The Art/Craft Program for New Parliament House: Origins and Work in Progress. In D. Missingham & A. Selenitsch (Eds.), *Collaborative Designs: Working Together in Architecture* (pp. 2 - 6). North Melbourne, Victoria: Meat Market Craft Centre.
- Berliner, P. (1994). *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Berman, M. (1999). The Two Faces of Creativity. In A. Montuori & R. Purser (Eds.), *Social Creativity* (Vol. 1, pp. 83 - 103). Cresskill, New Jersey.
- Bermingham, A. (1992). The Origin of Painting and the End of Art: Wright of Derby's *Corinthian Maid*. In J. Barrell (Ed.), *Painting and the Politics of Culture: New Essays on British Art, 1700 - 1800*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Berners-Lee, T., Hendler, J., & Lassila, O. (2001). The Semantic Web. *Scientific American*, May, 34 - 43.
- Best, J., & Kahn, J. (2006). *Research in Education* (10th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.
- Binns, V. (1991a). Context and Value: 'A View from the "I" of an Artist in Community' and other stories. In V. Binns (Ed.), *Community and the Arts* (pp. 147 - 166). Marrickville, NSW: Pluto Press.
- Binns, V. (Ed.). (1991b). *Community and the Arts*. Marrickville, NSW: Pluto Press.
- Bolman, L., & Deal, T. (2003). *Reframing Organisations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership* (3rd ed.). San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.
- Bonk, C., Wisher, R., & Nigrelli, M. (2004). Learning Communities, Communities of Practice: Principles, Technologies and Examples. In K. Littleton, D. Miell & D. Faulkner (Eds.), (pp. 199 - 219). New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc.
- Bottrell, F. (1972). Aspects of Sensibility. In *The Artist Craftsman in Australia* (pp. 3 - 4). North Sydney, NSW: Jack Pollard Pty Ltd.
- Brennan, A. (1980). Transposition of a Painting into Tapestry. In *Master Weavers, Tapestry from the Dovecot Studios 1912 - 1980 (Catalogue)*. Edinburgh, Scotland.
- Brenson, M. (1995). Democracy and the Idea of the Artist. In Becker, C. & Wiens, A. (Eds.). (1995). *The Artist in Society: Rights, Roles and Responsibilities*. (pp. 66 - 76). Chicago: New Art Examiner Press.
- Brien, D. & Bruns, A. (2006). Collaborate. *M/C Journal. A Journal of Media and Culture*, 9 (2).
- Brown, L. (1991). *Groups for Growth and Change*. New York and London: Longman.

- Bruffee, K. A. (1993). *Collaborative learning: Higher education, interdependence, and the authority of knowledge*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Bryner, A., & Markova, D. (1996). *An Unused Intelligence*. Berkley, California: Conari Press.
- Bullock, A., Stallybrass, O., & Trombley, S. (Eds.). (1988). *The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought* (2nd ed.). Great Britain: Harper Collins.
- Burns, J. (1978). *Leadership*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Burns, R. (2000). *Introduction to Research Methods* (4th ed.). Frenchs Forest, NSW: Pearson Education Australia.
- Buzzanell, P. (1994). Gaining a voice: Feminist perspectives in organizational communication. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 7, 339 - 383.
- Buzzanell, P. (Ed.). (2000). *Rethinking Organizational & Managerial Communication From Feminist Perspectives*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Callen, A. (1979). *Angel in the Studio*. London: Astragal Books.
- Callen, A. (1984 - 85). Sexual Division of Labor in the Arts and Crafts Movement. *Women's Art Journal*, 5(2), 1 - 6.
- Calvocoressi, R. (2002). *Lee Miller: Portraits From a Life*. New York: Thames & Hudson Inc.
- Campbell, M. (1995). Volterrano and the Role of *Imitatio* in the Seventeenth-Century Practice of Art in Florence. In A. Ladis, C. Wood & W. Eiland (Eds.), *The Craft of Art: Originality and Industry in the Italian Renaissance and Baroque Workshop*. Georgia: The University of Georgia Press.
- Ceruti, M. (1994). *Constraints and Possibilities: The Evolution of Knowledge and the Knowledge of Evolution*. Laussane, Switzerland: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers S.A.
- Chadwick, W. (1996). *Women, Art And Society* (2nd ed.). London: Thames and Hudson.
- Chadwick, W. (Ed.). (1985). *Women Artists and the Surrealist Movement*. Great Britain: Thames and Hudson.
- Chadwick, W., & De Courtivron, I. (Eds.). (1993). *Significant Others: Creativity & Intimate Partnership*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Chalmers, R. (1992). *Collaborative School Management: One Principal's Experience*. Milton, Qld: The Jacaranda Press.
- Chiapello, E. (2004). Evolution and Co-optation. *Third Text*, 18(6), 585 - 594.
- Claburn, A. (1995). The Collaborative Spirit. In *Australian Tapestries*. South Melbourne, Victoria: Victorian Tapestry Workshop.
- Clark, J. (1996). Reflections on Lichtenstein. *artonview*(5), 34 - 36.
- Clegg, S., Kornberger, M., & Pitsis, T. (2005). *Managing and Organisations*. London: Sage Publications.
- Clift, R., Veal, M., Holland, P., Johnson, M., & McCarthy, J. (1995). *Collaborative Leadership and Shared Decision Making*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Close, C. (2004). *Chuck Close Prints: Process and Collaboration*. Houston, USA: Princeton University Press.
- Cochrane, G. (1992). *The Crafts Movement in Australia: A History*. NSW: New South Wales University Press.
- Colaizzi, P. (1978). Psychological research as a phenomenologist views it. In R. Valle & M. King (Eds.), *Existential Phenomenological Alternatives for Psychology* (pp. 48 - 71). New York: Oxford University Press.

- Cole, B. (1983). *The Renaissance Artist At Work: From Pisano to Titian* (1st ed.). New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- Cole, B. (1995). Titian and the Idea of Originality in the Renaissance. In A. Ladis, C. Wood & W. Eiland (Eds.), *The Craft of Art: Originality and Industry in the Italian Renaissance and Baroque Workshop*. Georgia: The University of Georgia Press.
- Collingwood, R. G. (1938). *The Principles of Art*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cooper, D. (Ed.). (1995). *A Companion to Aesthetics*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers.
- Cornford, M., & Cross, D. (2004). Inside Outside. *Third Text*, 18(6), 657 - 665.
- Coughlin, L., Wingard, E., & Hollihan, K. (Eds.). (2005). *Enlightened Power*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey - Bass.
- Creswell, J. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Method Approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1995). Society, culture and person: a systems view of creativity. In R. Sternberg (Ed.), *The nature of creativity* (pp. 325 - 339). USA: Cambridge University Press.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1996). *Creativity*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Rich, G. (1997). Musical Improvisation: A Systems Approach. In R. K. Sawyer (Ed.), *Creativity in Performance* (pp. 43 - 66): Ablex Publishing Corporation.
- Cumming, E., & Kaplan, W. (1991). *The Arts And Crafts Movement*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- De Laat, M., & Lally, V. (2004). Creativity and the Net: How Do Researchers Collaborate Creatively Using the Internet? In Miell, D., & Littleton, K. (Eds.). (2004). *Collaborative Creativity: Contemporary Perspectives*. (pp. 126 - 143). London: Free Association Books.
- De La Croix, H., Tansey, R. G., & Kirkpatrick, D. (1991). *Art Through The Ages* (9th ed.). USA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers.
- De Vecchi, P. (Ed.). (1994). *The Sistine Chapel: A Glorious Restoration*. New York: Harry N. Abrams.
- Delbanco, N. (1982). *Group Portrait*. New York: William Morrow and Company.
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (1994). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.). (2000). *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Dewey, J. (1934). *Art as Experience*. New York: Pedigree Books.
- Dolan, D. (1988, June). Missed Opportunity: New Parliament House Artworks. *The Adelaide Review*, 25.
- Dominguez, E. (2006). *Wiki journalism*. Retrieved 15/9/06, 2006, from www.lavanguardia.es/gen/20060914/51283227918/posts/wiki-journalism-internet
- Donnelly, M. (2003). "All My Own Work!" Independent Artist or Collaborator? The Fine Line Which Art Teachers of the Blind and Vision-Impaired Tread. *Australian Art Education*, 26(1), 38 - 44.
- Dormer, P. (1994). *The Art of the Maker*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Dormer, P. (Ed.). (1997). *The Culture of Craft: Status and future*. United Kingdom: Manchester University Press.
- Douglas, J. D. (1985). *Creative Interviewing*. Beverley Hills, CA: Sage.

- Douglas, T. (2000). *Basic Groupwork*. New York: Routledge.
- Drucker, J. (1993). Collaboration without object(s) in the early Happenings. *Art Journal*, 52(4), 51 - 58.
- DuBois, P. (1995). Democracy and the Idea of the Artist. In Becker, C. & Wiens, A. (Eds.). (1995). *The Artist in Society: Rights, Roles and Responsibilities*. (pp. 16 - 22). Chicago: New Art Examiner Press.
- DuBrin, A. (1997). *Fundamentals of Organizational Behavior*. Cincinnati, Ohio: South-Western College Publishing.
- Eisler, R. (1995). *The Chalice and The Blade*. USA: Harper San Francisco.
- Eisler, R. (2005). The Economics of the Enlightened Use of Power. In L. Coughlin, E. Wingard & K. Hollihan (Eds.), *Enlightened Power* (pp. 21 - 36). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ely, B. (2003, March - May). Taxing Fine art Academics. *NAVA Newsletter*, p. 9.
- Emmison, M., & Smith, P. (2000). *Researching the Visual: Images, Objects, Contexts and Interactions in Social and Cultural Inquiry*. London: Sage.
- Engestrom, Y. (1994). Teachers as collaborative thinkers: Activity - theoretical study of an innovative teacher team. In I. H. Carlgren, G. & Vaage, S. (Ed.), *Teachers' minds and actions: Research on teachers' thinking and practice* (pp. 43 - 61). Briston, PA: Falmer.
- Engstedt, E. (2005). *Your Turn: Collaboration takes real cooperation*. Retrieved 22/11/05, 2005, from www.helenair.com/articles/2005/10/02/opinions/a05100205_01.txt
- Erickson, F. (1989). Research Currents: Learning and Collaboration in Teaching. *Language Arts*, Vol. 66(4), 430 - 441.
- Farrell, M. (2001). *Collaborative Circles*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Feldman, D. (2000). Creative Collaboration - Foreword. In *Creative Collaboration* (pp. ix - xiii). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fisher, H. (2005). The Natural Leadership Talents of Women. In L. Coughlin, E. Wingard & K. Hollihan (Eds.), *Enlightened Power* (pp. 133 - 149). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Fontana, A., & Frey, J. (2005). The Interview: From Neutral Stance to Political Involvement. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Qualitative Research* (pp. 695 - 727). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Friend, M., & Cook, L. (2003). *Interactions: Collaborative Skills for School Professionals* (4th ed.). Boston, Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon.
- Gablik, S. (1984). *Has Modernism Failed?* USA: Thames & Hudson.
- Gadd, I., & Wallis, P. (Eds.). (2002). *Guilds, Society & Economy in London 1450 - 1800*. United Kingdom: Centre for Metropolitan History.
- Gardner, J., Metcalfe, J., Pisarski, A., & Riedlinger, M. (2006). *Collaborating across the sectors*. Occasional Papers No. 3., November. Council for Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. Department of Education, Science and Training.
- Garvin, C. (1997). *Contemporary Group Work* (3rd ed.). USA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Gay, L. R. (2003). *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Gergen, D. (2005). Women Leading in the Twenty-First Century. In L. Coughlin, E. Wingard & K. Hollihan (Eds.), *Enlightened Power* (pp. xv - xxix). San Francisco, CA: Jossey - Bass.
- Gibson, J. W., & Hodgetts, R. (1989). *Organisational Communication* (2nd ed.). New York: Harper Collins Publishers Inc.

- Gibson, J. W., & Hodgetts, R. (1991). *Organisational Communication* (2nd ed.). New York: Harper Collins Publishers Inc.
- Gillham, B. (2000). *Case Study Research Methods*. London and New York: Continuum.
- Giurgola, R. (1982). NLA, MS8369 Series 12, Folder 63.
- Gogatz, A. & Mondejar, R. (2005). *Business Creativity*. Great Britain: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Goldstein, C. (1996). *Teaching Art: Academies and Schools from Vasari to Albers*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gray, C., & Malins, J. (2004). *Visualising Research: A Guide to the Research Process in Art and Design*. USA: Ashgate.
- Green, C. (1999). Disappearance and Photography in Post-Object Art: Christo and Jeanne-Claude. *Afterimage*, 27(3), 13 - 14.
- Green, C. (2001). *The Third Hand: Collaboration in Art from Conceptualism to Postmodernism*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.
- Green, C. (2004). Group Soul: Who owns the Artist Fusion? *Third Text*, 18(6), 595 - 608.
- Green, S. (2005). Domestic Arts in the White Cube. *Artlink*, 25(1), 56 - 58.
- Greenberg, A. C. (1979). *Artists and Revolution: Dada and the Bauhaus, 1917-1925*. Michigan: UMI Research Press.
- Greer, G. (1979). *The Obstacle Race: The fortunes of women painters and their work*. London: Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd.
- Gude, O. (1989). An Aesthetics of Collaboration. *Art Journal* (Winter), 321 - 323.
- Hargrove, R. (1998). *Mastering the Art of Creative Collaboration*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Harlan, J. (1998). *Feminism*. Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO.
- Harrison, C. (1993). Creativity at Work. In P. Barrentine (Ed.), *When The Canary Stops Singing* (pp. 197 - 207). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- Haslam, S. (2000). *Psychology in Organisations*. New York: Sage Publications.
- Hawkins, G. (1990, 21 - 23 February). *Public Patronage and Community Arts*. Paper presented at the Extending Parameters Forum, Queensland Art Gallery.
- Hebdige, D. (1992). A Report on the Western Front. In F. Frascina & J. Harris (Eds.), *Art in Modern Culture: An Anthology of Critical Texts*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Hecksher, K. (2004). European-Style Woodcut. In *Chuck Close Prints: Process and Collaboration (catalogue)*. (pp. 121 - 128). Houston, USA: Princeton University Press.
- Hellriegel, D., Slocum, J., & Woodman, R. (1992). *Organizational Behaviour* (6th ed.). St Paul, MN: West Publishing Company.
- Henry, M. (1996). *Parent-School Collaboration: Feminist Organisational Structures and School Leadership*. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.
- Heslop, T. (1997). How strange the change from major to minor: hierarchies and medieval art. In P. Dormer (Ed.), *The Culture of Craft: Status and future* (pp. 53 - 66). United Kingdom: Manchester University Press.
- Hetchcock, B. (2005). *Approach can make divorce less of a battle*. Retrieved 5/12/05, 2005, from www.gazette.com/display.php?id=1312600&secid=1
- Hinchcliffe, M. (1986, 7 Nov). An embroidery to remember. *Canberra Times*.
- Hobson, S. G. (1920). *National Guilds And The State*. London: G.Bell and Sons, Ltd.

- Hogg, M. & Terry, D. (2000). Social identity and self-categorisation processes in organisational contexts. *Academy of Management Review*, 25 (1), 121 - 140.
- Holmes, B. (2004). Artistic Autonomy and the Communication Society. *Third Text*, 18(6), 547 - 555.
- Hooker, C., Nakamura, J., & Csikzentmihalyi, M. (2003). The Group as Mentor: Social Capital and the Systems Model of Creativity. In *Group Creativity: Innovation Through Collaboration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hunt, S. (2005). Inclusive Transformation. In L. Coughlin, E. Wingard & K. Hollihan (Eds.), *Enlightened Power* (pp. 411 - 436). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Husserl, E. (1999). *Cartesian meditations: an introduction to phenomenology*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic.
- Hyslop, D. (1982). Canberra: NLA, MS8369 Series 12, Folder 63.
- Irby, B., Brown, G., Duffy, J., & Trautman, D. (2002). The synergistic leadership theory. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 40(4/5), 304 - 323.
- Isaacs, J. (1992). *The Gentle Arts: 200 Years of Australian Women's Domestic & Decorative Arts*. Sydney, NSW: Ure Smith Press.
- Isaak, J. (1996). *Feminism and Contemporary Art*. New York: Routledge.
- Ivinson, G. (2004). The Social Consequences of Classroom Art: Collaboration, Social Identities and Social Representations. In D. Miell & K. Littleton (Eds.), *Collaborative Creativity: Contemporary Perspectives* (pp. 96 - 109). London: Free Association Books.
- Jackson, D., Daly, J., & Chang, E. (2003). Approaches in qualitative research. In *Nursing Research: Methods, Critical Appraisal, and Utilisation* (2nd ed., pp. 139 - 153). Marrickville, NSW.
- Janin, J. (1831). Etre artiste. *L'Artiste*(1), 9 - 10.
- John-Steiner, V. (2000). *Creative Collaboration*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Johnstone, P. (1986). *Three Hundred Years of Embroidery 1600 - 1900*. Netley, South Australia: Wakefield Press.
- Jones, D. (2004). Assembling the Fragments. In *Fabrics of Change: Trading Identities*. Wollongong, NSW: Faculty of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong.
- Kayser, T. (1994). *Building Team Power*. New York: Irwin Professional Publishing.
- Kerr, J., & Holder, J. (Eds.). (1999). *Past Present: The National Women's Art Anthology*. Sydney: Craftsman House.
- Kirby, S. (1991). An Historical Perspective on the Community Arts Movement. In V. Binns (Ed.), *Community and the Arts*. Marickville (pp. 19 - 30). Marrickville, NSW: Pluto Press.
- Kirby, S. (1992). *Sight Lines: Women's Art and Feminist Perspectives in Australia*. East Roseville, NSW: Craftsman House in association with Gordon and Breach.
- Kline, N. (1993). *Women and Power*. London: BBC Enterprises.
- Kumar, R. (1997). *Research Methodology*. South Melbourne, Australia: Longman.
- Kvale, S. (1996). *InterViews*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Leeson, R. A. (1979). *Travelling Brothers*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.
- Lenten, T., Darby, M., Miller, S., & Sibbel, H. (1981). *Praxis: A Guide to Art/Craft Curriculum Development*. Melbourne, Victoria: Education Department of Victoria.
- Lightbrown, R. W. (1980). *Donatello & Michelozzo: An Artistic Partnership and its Patrons in the Early Renaissance* (Vol. 1). London: Harvey Miller.

- Lingen, R., Blanton, R., & Little, T. (2004). Reduction Linoleum. In *Chuck Close Prints: Process and Collaboration (catalogue)*. (pp. 85 - 96). Houston, USA: Princeton University Press.
- Littleton, K., Miell, D., & Faulkner, D. (Eds.). (2004). *Learning to Collaborate, Collaborating to Learn*. New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.
- Lockwood, M. S., & Glaister, E. (1978). *Art Embroidery: A Treatise on the Revived Practice of Decorative Needlework* (Reprint of the 1878 ed.). New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc.
- Lorber, J. (1994). *Paradoxes of Gender*. London: Yale University Press.
- Lucas, A. (1983). *Women in the Middle Ages*. Great Britain: The Harvester Press.
- Lucie-Smith, E. (1981). *The Story of Craft: The Craftsman's Role in Society*. Oxford: Phaidon.
- MacDonald, B., & Walker, R. (1975). Case study and the social philosophy of education research. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 5, 3.
- Maginnis, H. B. J. (1995). The Craftsman's Genius: Painters, Patrons, and Drawings in Trecento Siena. In A. Ladis, C. Wood & W. Eiland (Eds.), *The Craft of Art: Originality and Industry in the Italian Renaissance and Baroque Workshop*. Georgia: The University of Georgia Press.
- Magolda, B. (1992). *Knowing and Reasoning in College*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Malone, Z. (2005). *Middle school concept aims to make education more personable*. Retrieved 8 April, 2005, from www.goedwardsville.com/site/news.cfm?brd=2291
- Mancinelli, F. (1994). The Problem of Michelangelo's Assistants. In P. De Vecchi (Ed.), *The Sistine Chapel: A Glorious Restoration* (pp. 46 - 79). New York: Harry N. Abrams.
- Manen, M. (1990). *Researching Living Experience*. London, Ontario, Canada: State University of New York Press.
- Manning, M., & Haddock, P. (1989). *Leadership Skills For Women*. California, USA: Kogan Page.
- Mari, B. (2001). How and Why. In *Words of Wisdom: A Curator's Vade Mecum on Contemporary Art* (pp. 105 - 107). New York: Independent Curators International.
- Markowitz, S. (1994). The Distinction between Art and Craft. *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 28(1), 55 - 70.
- Maslow, A. (1954). *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Matchett, S. (2005, May 27 - 28). Y I'm not buying it. *Weekend Australian*, p. R40.
- Matheson, V. (1988). Weaving a Masterpiece in Wool. *The Australian Women's Weekly*, February, 8 - 9.
- Mattessich, P., Murray-Close, M., & Monsey, B. (2004). *Collaboration: What Makes It Work* (2nd ed.). Saint Paul, Minnesota: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.
- May, W. (2005). Teachers as Curriculum Developers. In R. Neperud (Ed.), *Context, Content and Community in Art Education* (pp. 53 - 86). New York: Teachers College Press.
- MCA. (2005). *Situation: Collaborations, Collectives And Artist Networks From Sydney, Singapore, Berlin (Exhibition Catalogue)*. Sydney, NSW: Museum of Contemporary Art.
- McCabe, C. J. (1984). *Artistic Collaboration in the Twentieth Century*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution.
- McDermott, F. (2002). *Inside Group Work*. NSW: Allen & Unwin.

- McGrath, V. (2002). *Coloured (Exhibition catalogue)*. Launceston, Tasmania: School of Visual and Performing Arts.
- McMillan, J., & Schumacher, S. (2006). *Research in Education: Evidence-Based Inquiry* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.
- McPhee, J. (1988). *Australian Folk and Popular Art in the Australian National Gallery*. Canberra, ACT: Australian National Gallery.
- McRee, B., & Dent, T. (1999). Working Women in the Medieval City. In L. Mitchell (Ed.), *Women in Medieval Western European Culture* (pp. 241 - 256). USA: Garland Publishing.
- McSweeney, P., & Alexander, D. (1996). *Managing Volunteers Effectively*. Great Britain: Arena.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962). *Phenomenology of Perception*. Great Britain: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Midgley, C. (2006, 19 - 20 August). Why we're hemispheres apart. *The Weekend Australian*, p. 26.
- Miell, D., & Littleton, K. (Eds.). (2004). *Collaborative Creativity: Contemporary Perspectives*. London: Free Association Books.
- Miell, D., MacDonald, R., & Hargreaves, D. (Eds.). (2005). *Music Communication*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Miller, B. (1986). *Towards a New Psychology of Women*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Mitchell, L. (Ed.). (1999). *Women in Medieval Western European Culture*. USA: Garland Publishing.
- Mockros, C., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1999). The Social Construction of Creative Lives. In A. Montuori, & Purser, R. (Eds.) (Ed.), *Social Creativity Volume 1* (pp. 175 - 218). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Modjeska, D. (1999). *Stravinsky's Lunch*. Sydney, NSW: Pan McMillan.
- Monson, I. (1996). *Saying Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Montuori, A. (1992). Creativity, Chaos, and Self-Renewal in Human Systems. *World Futures*, 35, 195 - 209.
- Montuori, A. (2003). The complexity of improvisation and the improvisation of complexity: Social science, art and creativity. *Human Relations*, 56(2), 237 - 245.
- Montuori, A., & Purser, R. (1995). Deconstructing The Lone Genius Myth: Toward A Contextual View of Creativity. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 35(3), 69 - 112.
- Montuori, A., & Purser, R. (1999a). Social Creativity: Introduction. In A. Montuori & R. Purser (Eds.), *Social Creativity* (Vol. 1, pp. 1 - 45). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Montuori, A., & Purser, R. (Eds.). (1999b). *Social Creativity Volume 1*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Montuori, A., & Purser, R. (Eds.). (1999c). *Social Creativity Volume 2* (Vol. 2). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Moran, D. (2000). *Introduction to Phenomenology*. New York; London: Routledge.
- Moran, S., & John-Steiner, V. (2004). How Collaboration in Creative Work Impacts Identity and Motivation. In D. Miell & K. Littleton (Eds.), *Collaborative Creativity: Contemporary Perspectives* (pp. 11 - 25). London: Free Association Books.
- Morewedge, R. (Ed.). (1975). *The Role of Woman in the Middle Ages*. New York, USA: State University of New York Press.

- Morrison, B. (2005). *Black Day for the Blue Pencil*. Retrieved August 6, 2005, from <http://books.guardian.co.uk/departments/generalfiction/story/0,6000,1543308,00.html>
- Mumby, D. (1996). Feminism, postmodernism, and organizational communication: A critical reading. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 9, 259 - 295.
- Munhall, P. (1994). *Revisioning Phenomenology*. New York: National League for Nursing.
- N6 Reference Guide*. (1st ed.)(2002). Melbourne, Australia: QSR International Pty Ltd.
- Neperud, R. (Ed.) (1995). Transitions in Art Education: A Search for Meaning. In *Context, Content and Community in Art Education* (pp. 1 - 22). New York: Teachers College Press.
- NGA. (1996). *Islands: Contemporary Installations (Catalogue)*. Canberra, ACT: Thames and Hudson.
- Nochlin, L. (2003). Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists? In A. Jones (Ed.), *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader* (pp. 229 - 233). New York: Routledge.
- Oesterreicher-Mollwo, M. (1978). *Surrealism and Dadaism: Provocative Destruction, the Path within and the Exacerbation of the Problem of a Reconciliation of Art and Life*. Oxford: Phaidon Press Ltd.
- Ogilvy, J. (1989). This postmodern business. *The Deeper News*, 1(5), 2 - 23.
- Olesen, V. (2005). Early Millennial Feminist Qualitative Research. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Qualitative Research* (pp. 235 - 278). Thousand Oaks, California.: Sage.
- Onyx, J., & Leonard, R. (2000). Women, Volunteering and Social Capital. In J. Warburton & M. Oppenheimer (Eds.), *Volunteers and Volunteering* (pp. 113 - 124). Sydney, NSW: The Federation Press.
- Opfell, O. S. (1991). *Special Visions: Profiles of Fifteen Women Artists from the Renaissance to the Present Day*. North Carolina: McFarland & Company.
- Padgett, R., Dine, J., Barron, S., Cage, J., Rand, A., Yau, J., et al. (1993). Interactions between Artists and Writers. *Art Journal*, 52(4), 72 - 80.
- Parker, R., & Pollock, G. (1981). *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology*. New York: Pantheon.
- Parry, L. (1988). *Textiles of the Arts and Crafts Movement*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Pateman, T. (1991). *Key Concepts: A Guide to Aesthetics, Criticism and the Arts in Education*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Patton, M. (1987). *How to Use Qualitative Methods in Education*. Newbury Park, California: Sage.
- Paulus, P., Brown, V., & Ortega, A. (1999). Group Creativity. In A. Montuori & R. Purser (Eds.), *Social Creativity* (Vol. 2, pp. 151 - 176). Creskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Paulus, P., & Nijstad, B. (Eds.). (2003). *Group Creativity: Innovation Through Collaboration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Penrose, A. (1988). *The Lives of Lee Miller* (First paperback edition ed.). London: Thames & Hudson.
- Perkin, C. (2006a, September 2 - 3). No friend of the big ego. *The Weekend Australian*, p. 19.
- Perkin, C. (2006b, October 7 - 8). Smith 'hot stuff' in the art world as curator gate closes. *The Weekend Australian*, p. 10.

- PHEC. (1988). *A Work of Many Hands*. Canberra, ACT: Australian Government Publishing Service.
- Pickering, F. P. (1970). *Literature & Art in the Middle Ages*. London: Macmillan.
- Pike, W., Brent, Y., MacEachren, A., Gahegan, M., & Chaoqing, Y. (2005). Retooling Collaboration. *Environment*, 47(2), 8 - 21.
- Pollio, H., Henley, T., & Thompson, C. (1997). *The Phenomenon of Everyday Life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Prose, F. (2002). *The Lives of the Muses*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Prosser, G. (1989). *Visual & Craft Artists: A national study of the Australian Crafts and Visual Arts industry*. NSW: Australia Council.
- Purser, R., & Montuori, A. (1999). Organising as if Creativity Really Mattered. In A. Montuori & R. Purser (Eds.), *Social Creativity* (Vol. 2, pp. 313 - 357). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Raaberg, G. (1990). The Problematics of Women and Surrealism. In M. A. Caws, R. E. Kuenzli & G. Raaberg (Eds.), *Surrealism and Women*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Rabinovitz, L. (1980 - 81). Issues of Feminist Aesthetics: Judy Chicago and Joyce Wieland. *Woman's Art Journal*, 1(2), 38 - 41.
- Raymond, J. (1986). *A Passion for Friends*. London: Women's Press.
- Reed, B. G., & Garvin, C. (Eds.). (1983). *Groupwork with Women/Groupwork with Men* (Vol. 6): Haworth Press Inc.
- Reinach, A. (2002). Concerning Phenomenology. In D. Moran & T. Mooney (Eds.), *The Phenomenology Reader* (pp. 180 - 196). New York: Routledge.
- Reinharz, S. (1992). *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Renard, G. (1919). *Guilds in the Middle Ages*. London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd.
- Renwick, M. (1986, August 2). But Would You Hang It In Your Own House? *Good Weekend*, 44.
- Richards, A. (1987). Parliament House Embroidery. *Textile Fibre Forum*, 6(1), pp 8 - 9.
- Rickards, T., & De Cock, C. (1999). Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Creativity. In A. Montuori & R. Purser (Eds.), *Social Creativity* (Vol. 2, pp. 235 - 256). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Riese Hubert, R. (1998). Zurich Dada And Its Artist Couples. In N. Sawelson-Gorse (Ed.), *Women in Dada*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Robbins, S. (2003). *Organisational Behaviour* (10th ed.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Roberts, J. (2004). Collaboration as a Problem of Art's Cultural Form. *Third Text*. (2004). 18(6), 557 - 564.
- Roberts, J., & Wright, S. (2004). Art and Collaboration. *Third Text*, 18(6), 531 - 532.
- Rogers, J. (1992). *A Sense of Place: Contemporary Needlework*. Pymble, NSW: Angus & Robertson.
- Rogoff, B. (1990). *Apprenticeship in Thinking*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rogoff, B. (2003). *The Cultural Nature of Human Development*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Roots, G. (2002). *Designing the World's Best Public Art*. Mulgrave, Victoria: The Images Publishing Group.
- Rosenblum, R., & Janson, H. W. (1984). *19th - Century Art*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers.

- Rosener, J. (1990). Ways women lead. *Harvard Business Review*, Nov - Dec, 1990, 119 - 125.
- Rost, J. (1991). *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishers Group Inc.
- Rowley, S. (1989). Mind Over Matter? Reading the Art/Craft Debate. *West*, 1(1), 3 - 7.
- Rubin Suleiman, S. (1993). The Bird Superior meets the Bride of the Wind: Lenora Carrington & Max Ernst. In W. Chadwick & I. De Courtivron (Eds.), *Significant Others: Creativity & Intimate Partnership*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Sachs, H. (1971). *The Renaissance Woman*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Saint-Onge, H., & Wallace, D. (2003). *Leveraging Communities of Practice for Strategic Advantage*. USA: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Sawyer, R. K. (2003). *Group Creativity*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Sawyer, R. K. (2006). *Explaining Creativity*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sawyer, R. K. (Ed.). (1997). *Creativity in Performance*. USA: Ablex Publishing.
- Schiller, L. (1995). Stages of Development in Women's Groups: A Relational Model. In R. Kurland & R. Salmon (Eds.), *Group Work Practice in a Troubled Society* (pp. 117 - 138). New York: The Hamworth Press.
- Schneider Adams, L. (1996). *The Methodologies of Art*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Schneider, S. & Northcraft, G. (1999). Three social dilemmas of workforce diversity in organisations: a social identity perspective. *Human Relations* 52, 1445 - 1467.
- Schneider, Z., Elliott, D., LoBiondo-Wood, G., & Haber, J. (2003). *Nursing Research: Methods, Critical Appraisal and Utilisation* (2nd ed.). Marrickville, NSW: Mosby.
- Sharkey, P. (2001). Hermeneutic Phenomenology. In R. Barnacle (Ed.), *Phenomenology* (pp. 16 - 37). Melbourne, Victoria: RMIT University Press.
- Sharpnack, R. (2005). The Power of Shifting Context. In L. Coughlin, E. Wingard & K. Hollihan (Eds.), *Enlightened Power* (pp. 39 - 52). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Shepard, D. (Ed.). (2005). *Between the Lives: Partners in Art*. Auckland, NZ: Auckland University Press.
- Shiner, L. (2001). *The Invention of Art: A Cultural History*. London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Sholette, G. (1999). Counting on your collective silence: Notes on Activist Art as collaborative practice. *Afterimage*, 27(3), 18 - 20.
- Shriberg, A., Lloyd, C., Schriberg, D., & Williamson, M. (1997). *Practicing Leadership: Principles and Applications*. USA: John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Shroder, M. (1961). *Icarus: The Image of the Artist in French Romanticism*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Silverman, D. (2001). *Interpreting Qualitative Data* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Simons, H. (1996). The Paradox of Case Study. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 26(2), 225 - 240.
- Simonton, D. (1988). Creativity, leadership and chance. In R. Sternberg (Ed.), *The Nature of Creativity* (pp. 386 - 426). USA: Cambridge University Press.
- Simpson, J. A., & Weiner, E. S. C. (1989). *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Vol. 3, Chom - Creeky). Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Sowers, R. (1983). The Myth of Collaboration. *American Craft*, Dec/Jan, 44 - 45, 96.

- Stake, R. (1994). Case Studies. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 236 - 247). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Stake, R. (2000). Case Studies. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed., pp. 435 - 454). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Staley, E. (1906). *The Guilds of Florence*. London: Methuen & Co.
- Statham, H. (Ed.). (2000). *A Celebration in Stitches*. Launceston, Tasmania: The Embroiderers' Guild of Tasmania Inc.
- Stern, A., & Hicks, T. (2000). *The Process of Business/Environmental Collaborations*. Westport, Connecticut: Quorum Books.
- Sternberg, R. (Ed.). (1995). *The Nature of Creativity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Straus, D. (2002). *How to Make Collaboration Work*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.
- Strickland, K. (2003, 3 - 4 July). Mother Love. *The Weekend Australian Magazine*, pp. 14 - 17.
- Sullivan, G. (2005). *Art Practice As Research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Sultan, T. (2004). Introduction. In *Chuck Close Prints: Process and Collaboration (catalogue)* (pp. 9 - 18). Houston, USA: Princeton University Press.
- Sundgren, M., & Styre, A. (2004). Managing Organisational Creativity. In N. Adler, A. B. Shani & A. Styhre (Eds.), *Collaborative Research in Organisations* (pp. 237 - 253). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Symons, E. (2006, 15 - 16 July). No more the boss from hell. *The Weekend Australian*, p. 25.
- Tajfel, H. & Turner, J. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In S. Worchel & L. Austin (Eds.), *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, Chicago: Nilson-Hall.
- Tannen, D. (1998). *The Argument Culture*. New York: Random House.
- Taylor, C. & Barron, F. (Eds.). (1963). *Scientific Creativity*. New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Third Text. (2004). 18(6).
- Thomson, F. (1980). *Tapestry: Mirror of History*, United Kingdom: The Jacaranda Press.
- Thousand, J., Villa, R., & Nevin, A. (1994). *Creativity and Collaborative Learning*. Baltimore, Maryland: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company.
- Timms, P. (2004). *What's Wrong With Contemporary Art?* Sydney, NSW: University of New South Wales Press Ltd.
- Timms, P. (2005). I came to Japan because of the chopstick. *Artlink*, 25(1), 21 - 23.
- Tong, R. (1995). Feminism. In R. Audi (Ed.), *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Toseland, R., & Rivas, R. (1998). *An Introduction to Group Work Practice* (3rd ed.). USA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Travis, M. (1997). *The Director's Journey: The Creative Collaboration Between Directors, Writers and Actors*. California, USA: Michael Wise Productions.
- Tuckman, B. (1965). Developmental sequence in small groups. *Psychological Bulletin*, 63(6).
- Tushman, M. (1982). Managing communication networks in R & D laboratories. In Tushman, M. & Moore, W. (Eds.), *Readings in the management of innovation*, Boston: Pitman.

- Unwin, G. (1963). *The Gilds and Companies of London*. London: Frank Cass & Company Ltd.
- Van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching Lived Experience*. USA: State University of New York Press.
- Vasari, G. (1986a). The Life of Leonardo da Vinci [1452 - 1519]: The Florentine Painter and Sculptor (G. D. C. de Vere, Trans.). In M. Sonino (Ed.), *The Great Masters*. New York: Hugh Lauter Levin Associates, Inc.
- Vasari, G. (1986b). The Life of Michelagnolo Buonarroti - Michelangelo [1475 - 1564]: The Florentine Painter, Sculptor and Architect (G. D. C. de Vere, Trans.). In M. Sonino (Ed.), *The Great Masters*. New York: Hugh Lauter Levin Associates Inc.
- VTW. (1996). Synergy: an exhibition of Contemporary Australian Tapestries [Promotional pamphlet].
- VTW. (2005). *The Art of Collaboration: Masterpieces of Modern Tapestry from the Victorian Tapestry Workshop (Catalogue)*. South Melbourne, Victoria.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Wagenknecht-Harte, K. (1989). *Site + Sculpture: The Collaborative Design Process*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- Waldren, M. (2006, October 7 - 8). Who's on first, art's on second. *The Weekend Australian*, p. 19.
- Walker, S. (1996). Victorian Tapestry Workshop - Interpretations. In *Interpretations: The Woven Language of the Victorian Tapestry Workshop*. Boston, USA: Newton Arts Centre.
- Walwin, J. (1997). *Low Tide: Writings on Artists' Collaborations*. London: Black Dog Publishing Ltd.
- Warburton, J., & Oppenheimer, M. (Eds.). (2000). *Volunteers and Volunteering*. Sydney, NSW: The Federation Press.
- Ward, P. (1985, Aug 10 - 11). Our story - embroidered. *The Weekend Australian*, pp. not cited, ACT, NLA MS8369, Series 8361/8363, Folder 8367, SA Archives (ii).
- Webb, I. (2005). *Communities of Practice*. Retrieved 17/8/05, 2005, from www.educ.utas.edu.au/users/ilwebb/Research/cop.htm
- Webb, T. (2001). *The Collaborative Games*. Annandale, NSW: Pluto Press.
- Weeks, W. (1994). *Women Working Together*. Melbourne, Australia: Longman Cheshire.
- Weil, R. (1995). Old Masters. *Art News*, 94(September).
- Weisberg, R. (1993). *Creativity: Beyond the Myth of Genius*. USA: W.H. Freeman and Company.
- Welch, A. (2001). Finding a Way through the Maze. In R. Barnacle (Ed.), *Phenomenology* (pp. 58 - 73). Melbourne, Victoria: RMIT University Press.
- Weltge, S. W. (1998). *Bauhaus Textiles: Women Artists and the Weaving Workshop* (First paperback edition 1998 (Copyright 1993) ed.). London: Thames & Hudson.
- Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. USA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Werstch, J. E. (1985). *Culture, communication and cognition: Vygotskian perspectives*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- White, D., & O'Brien, K. (1999). *The Collaborative Decision Making 'Tool Kit'* (Vol. 1). Blacktown, NSW: K.D. Publications.

- Whiteley, S. (2005). Women Building Businesses. In L. Coughlin, E. Wingard & K. Hollihan (Eds.), *Enlightened Power* (pp. 217 - 229). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Winer, M., & Ray, K. (2000). *Collaboration Handbook*. Saint Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.
- Wolff, J. (1981, 1992). *The Social Production of Art*. New York: New York University Press.
- Wolff, J. (1989). *Women's Knowledge and Women's Art*. Brisbane, Australia: Institute for Cultural Policy Studies.
- Wolff, J. (1990). Feminine Sentences: Essays on Women & Culture. In *Feminine Sentences: Essays on Women & Culture* (pp. 67 - 102). Great Britain: University of California Press.
- Wolff, J. (1992). *The Social Production of Art*. New York: New York University Press.
- Wright, S. (2004). The Delicate Essence of Artistic Collaboration. *Third Text*, 18(6), 533 - 545.
- Yin, R. (1993). *Applications Of Case Study Research* (Vol. 34). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Yin, R. (2003). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

